Technical and Bibliographic Notes / Notes techniques et bibliographiques

The Institute has attempted to obtain the best original copy available for filming. Features of this copy which may be bibliographically unique, which may alter any of the images in the reproduction, or which may significantly change the usual method of filming, are checked below.

L'Institut a microfilmé le meilleur exemplaire qu'il lui a été possible de se procurer. Les détails de cet exemplaire qui sont peut-être uniques du point de vue bibliographique, qui peuvent modifier une image reproduite, ou qui peuvent exiger une modification dans la méthode normale de filmage sont indiqués ci-dessous.

- [x] Coloured covers/ Couverture de couleur
- [ ] Covers damaged/ Couverture endommagée
- [ ] Covers restored and/or laminated/ Couverture restaurée et/ou pelliculée
- [ ] Cover title missing/ Le titre de couverture manque
- [ ] Coloured maps/ Cartes géographiques en couleur
- [x] Coloured ink (i.e. other than blue or black)/ Encre de couleur (i.e. autre que bleue ou noire)
- [ ] Coloured plates and/or illustrations/ Planches et/ou illustrations en couleur
- [ ] Bound with other material/ Relié avec d'autres documents
- [ ] Tight binding may cause shadows or distortion along interior margin/ La reliure serrée peut causer de l'ombre ou de la distorsion le long de la marge intérieure
- [ ] Blank leaves added during restoration may appear within the text. Whenever possible, these have been omitted from filming/ Il se peut que certaines pages blanches ajoutées lors d'une restauration apparaissent dans le texte, mais, lorsque cela était possible, ces pages n'ont pas été filmées.
- [ ] Additional comments:/ Commentaires supplémentaires:

- [ ] Coloured pages/ Pages de couleur
- [ ] Pages damaged/ Pages endommagées
- [ ] Pages restored and/or laminated/ Pages restaurées et/ou pelliculées
- [x] Pages discoloured, stained or foxed/ Pages décolorées, tachetées ou piquées
- [ ] Pages detached/ Pages détachées
- [x] Showthrough/ Transparence
- [ ] Quality of print varies/ Qualité inégale de l'impression
- [ ] Continuous pagination/ Pagination continue
- [ ] Includes index(es)/ Comprend un (des) index

  Title on header taken from:/ Le titre de l'en-tête provient:

- [ ] Title page of issue/ Page de titre de la livraison
- [ ] Caption of issue/ Titre de départ de la livraison
- [ ] Masthead/ Générique (périodiques) de la livraison

This item is filmed at the reduction ratio checked below/
Ce document est filmé au taux de réduction indiqué ci-dessous.

10X	12X	14X	16X	18X	20X	22X	24X	26X	28X	30X	32X
					✓						

1.95

The Papers of Pastor Felix



The Papers of Pastor Felix

[Arthur John Lockhart]

William Briggs
Toronto

PS8473
O34P3

162727

COPYRIGHT, 1903, BY
JENNINGS AND PYE

Like mists that round a mountain gray
Hang for an hour, then melt away,
So I and nearly all my race
Have vanished from my native place.

Each haunt of boyhood's loves and dreams
More beautiful in fancy seems;
Yet if I to those scenes repair,
I find I am a stranger there.

O thou beloved Acadie!
How, whensoe'er I think of thee,
Dull grow these skies 'neath which I range,
While all the summer hills are strange.

Yet sometimes I discern thy gleam
In sparkles of the chiming stream;
And sometimes speaks thy haunting lore
The foam-wreathed Sibyl of the Shore.

And sometimes will mine eyes incline
To hill or wood that seems like thine;
Or, if the robin pipeth clear,
It is thy vernal note I hear.

And oft my heart will leap aflame,
To deem I hear thee call my name,—
To see thy face with gladness shine,
And find the joy that once was mine.

Contents.

	PAGE
Memory and Bells,	9
'Phemie; The Story of a Child,	53
Vernal Notes,	87
The Minister's Saturday Evening; A Symposium,	142
Winter on the Penobscot,	188
Our Doctor at Grand-Pré,	222
The Grace of Death,	244
Wave-Songs,	274
Autumnal Notes,	301
L'Envoy,	385

Memory and Bells.

I.

"Across the dykes the bell's low sound is borne
From green Grand Pré, abundant with the corn."
—John Frederick Herbin.

"'T is sweet to hear a brook; 't is sweet
To hear the Sabbath bell;
'T is sweet to hear them both at once,
Deep in a woody dell."
—Coleridge.

I THOUGHT, to-day, while the musical monitor, hanging in its tower near by, was "sprinkling the air with holy sounds," and the villagers were entering the sacred porch, how—when a boy in my father's house—I used to hear on Sabbath mornings the distant ringing of church bells among the Horton hills, sounding when the air was quiet, or when a favoring wind

"Scattered the tuneful largess far and near."

Distant chimes are they now, heard only in memory! Ah, how soon, in spite of cares and years, when the Magician of our Youth returns, touching us, we are children again! Surely some spirit within me held the invisible cord, pulling at the Bells of Memory!

II.

"How soft the music of those village bells,
Falling at intervals upon the ear
In cadence sweet! Now dying all away,
Now pealing loud again, and louder still,
Clear and sonorous as the gale comes on.
With easy force it opens all the cells
Where memory slept."

Can we ever hear the sound of bells at evening, softening over meadows and streams, nor think of the Saint of Olney,—renewing that glimpse, had long ago, of

"The embattled tower
Whence all the music?"

His memory animates my thought and prompts this reverie. Among all the chimes struck by the singers of England, none touch the innermost strings of life more deftly than those

heard at Berkhampstead by childish ears. Again we melt to the pathos of the lines:

> "I heard the bell toll'd on thy burial day,
> I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,
> And, turning from my nursery window, drew
> A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu."

Who that loves Cowper (and many there still are, we hope, to love him, for we know of none who in his best mood appeals more sweetly to the heart) has not listened to the melody floating to his ear long ago from Olney tower?—

> "Tall spire from which the sound of cheerful bells
> Just undulates upon the listening ear."

III.

And who was he who first struck the solemn chime? He surely wanted a music that should no longer linger and die alone among hollow vales and low birthplaces, but salute heaven with its winged echoes, and, stealing softly back, waft our aspirations thither. Perpetual benison to the head of the good Campanian bishop, Paulinias, or whoever he was, who first swung from its tower the inverted cup of brass or iron, with its jubilant clamor,—express

image of the lowly flower-bell, drooped so modestly, that "tolls its perfume on the passing air." It was a goodly invention, of noble use and high delight, that hath consecration of melody above the sobbing murmurs of a desolate world. I marvel not at the legends, like summer mists creeping into the turrets of the bells, and hanging them as with a gray veil, that their notes were once made the sweeter by the infusion of the martyr-maiden's holy blood; that to them were assigned the functions, not only of calling the living and bemoaning the dead, but of breaking the lightning in pieces and contending for mastery with the spirits of the storm.

IV.

The bell of the Moslem is the tongue of the muezzin, as from the tower of his mosque he summons the devout to his monotonous prayer. More appealing are the inaudible notes of the Angelus stealing out of Millet's picture: for we feel there is indeed one God, and that all ought to worship him. O the bells! the bells! and the notes stealing down from them! Spell-giving sounds are they, that take hold of masterful spirits, and sway them as wind

sways the corn. Not Napoleon alone pauses, as he attains the life-summit of some Alp, to take the message of some vocal vale. O ye bells! your distant voices are invitations and salutations from Eternity! O ye bells—of aspiration—of affection—of hope!—how ye ring out in memory! Poet-peals, heart-touching as any of nature's voices—like Heine's "far-off chimes, smiting with mysterious awe," bidding "insatiable yearning, profound sadness, steal into the heart;"—bells, perhaps, that fill us with a sense of the infinitude of being, lifting the boundaries of sense and thought far off,—like Milton's curfew, heard distinctly from some high plot of ground, sounding,—

> "Over some wide-watered shore,
> Swinging slow with sullen roar;"—

like a peal of chiming bells at evening under a starry sky, playing, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork."

And, when the hot and dusty day has run its course, is there not a chime, wished for and expected?

> "Twilight and evening bell,
> And after that the dark!"

Not the blank darkness of nothingness, but the softening, soothing shadows that are meant for rest, and which prelude the Eternal Morning.

There is an immortal Elegy, that with the tolling of any bell at evening, abides, a haunting spell of music, so long as human feeling and the English speech endure. Surely Milton and Gray will live in England, and wherever the sons of that great Mother have gone; nor will the curfew cease from memory, but must, however our social customs change, forever "toll the knell of parting day."

V.

The waste billow has a double voice—a melody that is not all its own. Did it not speak with sudden sharpness up out of the waves to you, that surf-swung bell, as you were swept past it? A startling clang beneath your prow, and it sounded faintly behind you.

"In the void air the music floats,"

or along the homeless sea. The Inchcape bell, like a siren, lures the wanton sailor to his own undoing. Like all music, the music of bells seems most consonant with winds and waters.

The harmonies of the turret have sweetness still more delicious coming down to still shores and quiet waters, to the wash of waves or the lapse of streams. We wonder if rowers still pause on their oars to listen, as on the evening when memory's minstrel mingled the melody of the rivers of Erin with that of alien waters, and lingered with Canadian boatmen listening to the chimes faintly tolling at St. Anne's! And, if long an absentee, has Father Prout been forgotten, with his

> "Bells of Shandon
> That sound so grand on
> The pleasant waters of the river Lee?"

There is a poetess of our own time whom the gentle-hearted feel to call sister. You will say Elizabeth Browning, or Christina Rossetti, and I will not gainsay you; but I now mean Jean Ingelow. We have all heard some dear school-girl give her own peculiar emphasis to the "Boston Bells" that rang over that "stolen tyde" when all the floods were out, and fair Elizabeth went calling, "Cusha, cusha," amid the watery meadows:

> "The ringers ran by two, by three,
> 'Pull, if ye never pulled before;
> Good ringers, pull your best,' quoth he."

Was ever anything at once so threadbare, a
so whole and sweet! But among her lat
poems is one into which she has woven, amon
many things of beauty and harmony, music
bells in the fruitful vale of Evesham. Ther
amid orchards by the river-side, she seems t
have heard, stealing from the old abbey, wha
here she gives us in a memory-chime:

"Often in dream I see full fain
The bell-tower beautiful that I love well,
A seemly cluster with her churches twain;
I hear adown the river, faint and swell
And lift upon the air that sound again,—
It is, it is,—how sweet no tongue can tell,
For all their world-wide breadth of shining foam
The bells of Evesham chiming Home, Sweet
Home!"

"Home, Sweet Home," and the bells,—how
happily they sound together! We put the
chimes of Ingelow to match the chimes of
Cowper.

Bells and the sea! What boy forgets
Southey and his Inchcape bell! What of the
bells that ring their music, cheerful or melan-
choly. beside the shore? Can any elfin music
ever visit earth like that out of the bosom of

the deep, from submerged towns, "lost in the olden times," as imagined by the German poet?

> "How from the sea's abyss there rings
> The sound of prayers and chimes."

Bells on shipboard! The sounding of the sailor's watch at night. A stroke of the imagination almost unequaled in all the pages of Longfellow, piercingly vivid is that scene on board the doomed *Valdemar,* when

> "The dismal ship bell tolled,
> And ever and anon she rolled
> And lurched into the sea."

Bells of the sea and shore! Bells of fate and warning—I hear them!

> "'O father, I hear the church bells ring!
> O say, what may it be?'
> 'T is a fog bell on a rock-bound coast!'
> And he steered for the open sea."

Ah! amid the perishing storms of this early winter, so cruelly begun, has this poetry of the past been written fact in the distress of the present, when but a fortnight since, from Cape Sable to Cape May, "the seaman's cry was heard along the deep!"

Bells by the lake-side! Many visions rise before me; many voices of many bells sound in my ears. I see Wordsworth, on a Sabbath morning, standing bareheaded, with quickened sense, listening to the softened tones that float down Ullswater, or across Rydalmere—motionless, while

"Down the placid lake
Floats the soft cadence of the church-tower bells."

Bells of the wilderness! I see Tom Campbell entranced with his wild Bavarian Eldern, to hear

"Church bells tolling to beguile
The cloud-born thunder passing by,"

with reminiscence of Von Weber's imitative music; or Ebenezer Elliott, traversing "the path of the quiet fields," reading Shenstone,

"When the village bell
Sounds o'er the river, softening up the dell."

Bells of the waste places! I catch a glimpse of Charles Kingsley, hurrying, with distracted, melancholy thoughts, over the snow-clad moorland, when cheery bells were ringing in Christmas Eve. Doleful they seem to him, for I hear him cry:

"The bells but mock the wailing world!"

Bells over the heather! Scott heard them chime in that wild song of Marmion! I see Tom Hood turning him about at Hampstead and pausing in the road to beguile his walk with notes of sweetness, that he might transmit them to us in sweetest verse:

"Dear bells! how sweet the sound of village bells,
When on the undulating air they swim!
Now loud as welcomes! Faint, now, as farewells!
And trembling all about the breezy dells,
As fluttered by the wings of cherubim."

VI.

Francis Mahony,—more familiarly known as "Father Prout,"—sings:

"With fond affection
And recollection,
I often think on
Those Shandon bells.
Whose sounds so wild would,
In the days of childhood,
Fling round my cradle
Their magic spells."

For the music of bells is somehow in league with the tenderest affections. We hear the same sound to which they once listened who now, maybe, are accustomed to the singing of

angels. What is that strain you remember in the far-off days, of "those evening bells?" It is your mother's voice, and you hear it when other, nearer voices are silent, singing as once often, but no more,

> "Of youth and home, and that glad time
> When last we heard their soothing chime."

Her image is radiant, for she is now with the departed she sang of, who stay not to hearken after earthly chimes. I fancy we will grow for a moment a little less worldly while we listen to these chimes of memory, and remember that "so 't will be when we are gone." I think, too, the Irish poet's follies will be forgotten by some who have the memory of a mother's voice singing his pensive verses.

> "Soft hour! which wakes the wish, and melts the heart. . . .
> Or fills with love the pilgrim on his way,
> As the far bell of vesper makes him start."

While we are busied about ringing the chimes of memory, we suddenly recall one of the sweetest ever heard, of the most plaintive, pathetic note, from an old and mighty poet—the Voice of the Middle Ages. Still the old,

strange, sweet words have power, we would that all might feel:

"Lo di ch'han detto a' dolce amici a dio;
Eche lo nuovo peregrin' d' amore
Punge, se ode Squilla di lontano,
Che paia 'l giorno pianger che si muore."

But, if we may not all do th[illegible], and sip this rill from the most liquid of Etruscan fountains, we may seek our fairest compensation in the English of that Rossetti who bore Dante's name; which is, on the whole, closest to the original, though that of Byron, quoted above—who caught the spirit of it—is certainly fine. These verses come to the soul of some with indescribable power. Who would not feel, though he had never read a line of his history, how Dante must have lived in a strange city and felt the woes of exile!

"It is the hour that thaws the heart, and sends
The voyager's affections home, when they
Since morn have said adieu to darling friends;
And smites the new-made pilgrim on his way
With love, if he a distant bell should hear
That seems a-mourning for the dying day."

One fondly lingers, as on enchanted ground, and wishes the pilgrim may not depart. We bring our sensibility into touch with this

lucent, fragrant ambergris of the mournful poet's heart and fancy—homeless, yet so in love with home—that down the centuries gains currency more and more with lovers of song. The more it is chafed, it smells the sweeter. It has still the charm that was felt by Macaulay, and is worthy his magnificent eulogium: "To other writers evening may be the season of dews and stars and radiant clouds. To Dante it is the hour of fond recollection and passionate devotion,—the hour which melts the heart of the mariner and kindles the love of the pilgrim,—the hour when the toll of the bell seems to mourn for another day which has gone and will return no more."

VII.

Stand, if you will, at the baptism of the bell, when it goes sounding up into the tower of St. Gudule, and "all men praise with lauding lips the apotheosis." Or wait, where the bell of Schiller is being rung, for the nuptial or the burial. Sweeter and sadder peals were never sounded than from our German poet's belfry.

Or ascend, with Victor Hugo, some visioned height of the long-ago city by the Seine. Paris

is aglow with the rising sun of a Whitsuntide, or an Easter morning. The half-slumbering metropolis lies beneath you, its almost innumerable spires emblazoned in that glory which lit the peaks of that fifteenth century even as it does ours. Hark! 't is the awakening of the bells! Soon as the sun gives the signal, as if the ear had visi- , there ascends the sounding column, there hovers the floating cloud of harmony. The towers of a thousand churches tremble melodiously. At first, as when an orchestra sends out its prelusive notes, "a tinkling vibration runs over the city, then comes the crashing peal that tells to the drowsiest ear the arrival of the sacred morning! At first the vibration of each bell rises straight, pure, and in a manner separate from that of the others, into the splendid morning sky; then, swelling by degrees, they blend, melt, amalgamate into a magnificent concert. It is now but one mass of sonorous vibrations, issuing incessantly from the innumerable steeples, which floats, undulates, bounds, whirls over the city, and expands far beyond the horizon the deafening circle of its oscillations. That sea of harmony, however, is not a chaos. Vast and deep as it is, it has not lost

its transparency; you see in it each group of notes that has flown from the belfries, winding along apart; you may follow the dialogue, by turns low and shrill; you may see the octaves skipping from steeple to steeple; you watch them springing light, winged, sonorous from the silver bell; dropping dull, faint, and feeble from the wooden; you admire the rich gamut incessantly running up and down the seven bells of St. Eustache; you see clear and rapid notes dart about in all directions, make three or four luminous zigzags, and vanish like lightning. Down yonder the Abbey of St. Martin sends forth its harsh, sharp tones; here the Bastile raises its sinister and husky voice; at the other extremity is the great tower of the Louvre, with its counter-tenor. The royal chimes of the palace throw out incessantly on all sides resplendent trills, upon which falls, at measured intervals, the heavy toll from the belfry of Notre Dame, which makes them sparkle like the anvil under the hammer. From time to time you see tones of all shapes, proceeding from the triple peal of St. Germain des Pres, passing before you. Then again at intervals this mass of sublime sounds opens and makes way for the *strette* of the Ave

Maria, which glistens like an aigrette of stars. Beneath, in the deepest part of the concert, you distinguish confusedly the singing within the churches, which transpires through the vibrating pores of their vaults. Verily this is an opera which is well worth listening to. In the ordinary way, the ordinary noise issuing from Paris in the daytime is the talking of the city; at night it is the breathing of the city; in this case it is the singing of the city.

"Lend your ears, then, to this *tutti* of steeples; diffuse over the whole the buzz of a million human beings, the eternal murmur of the river, the infinite piping of the wind, the grave and distant quartet of the four forests placed like immense organs on the four hills of the horizon; soften down as with a demi-tint, all that is too shrill and too harsh in the central mass of sound, and say if you know anything more rich, more gladdening, more dazzling than that tumult of bells; than that furnace of music; than those ten thousand brazen tones breathed all at once from flutes of stone three hundred feet high; than that city which is but one orchestra; than the symphony rushing and roaring like a tempest."

VIII.

"Rustling runners and sharp bells."

Not sharp, but soft, of sound, is my fancy. "Your bells are sweet," I said to my companion, as we went gliding at moonlit evening along a woodland road, between firs hooded with late snow. "Yes," he observed, "they call them 'chimes.' I object to the obstreperous jingle, yet want something on winter nights beside the creaking of my sleigh to listen to." At the word "chimes" I fell into silence, and went off fairying. My friend furnishes me a moonlit ride and an agreeable companion, who says the fitting word, not too often, but leaves me to pleasant memories and fancies set to the music of fairy bells. They do not rudely assault, they entice, the ear. There is a delicate, persistent jingle-jangle, and through my brain these words go galloping on:

"How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,
In the icy air of night,
While the stars that oversprinkle
All the heavens seem to tinkle
With a crystalline delight;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
To the tintinnabulation that so musically wells
From the bells."

For, indeed, "the sleigh-drive through the frosty night," which is one of the imaginative joys of "Snow Bound," can have no more musical accompaniment than the chimey tinkle of those delicate fairy bells.

IX.

But with Yule the bells reach the summit of their power. Then they are riotous; from that height they triumph! And the chimes that summon the New-Year, how they stir us! Then we revert again to the clangorous notes where the grand organ of the "In Memoriam" swells its loudest:

"The Christmas bells from hill to hill
Answer each other in the mist.

. . . . . .

Each voice four changes on the wind,
That now dilate, and now increase,
Peace and good will, good will and peace,
Peace and good will, to all mankind.

. . . . . .

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,
The flying cloud, the frosty light:
The year is dying in the night;
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die."

And again, the softer strain of the laureate of our own coasts, who bids us hear

"The bells on Christmas-day
Their old familiar carols play,"

till instantly all the memory chimes of Yuletide are resounding, to mind us of star and sage, of manger and babe, of shepherd and singing seraph.

X.

"How sweet the tuneful bells' responsive peal!
. . . . . .
And hark! with lessening cadence now they fall.
And now along the white and level tide
They fling their melancholy music wide;
Bidding me many a tender thought recall
Of summer days and those delightful years
When from an ancient tower, in life's fair prime,
The mournful magic of their mingling chime
First waked my wondering childhood into tears."
—William Lisle Bowles, "Bells of Ostend."

I recall one evening of a by-gone summer, when I had gone into the upper part of what Longfellow has termed, "that leafy, blossoming, and beautiful Cambridge"—home of genius and of learning—then in its season of richest efflorescence, and at the sweetest time of the Sabbath. The air, softened and serene, was ready for its burden of musical vibration; the sky was full of faintly-tinted light, and the

foliage was fresh and unsullied from recent showers. I stood at the gate of the "Craigie House"—demesne of valor and song! haunt of a hero of an earlier age, and a master-minstrel of our own—when the chimes commenced to float upward to my ear from the heart of the bowery city below. Memory-bells again! It was charmed listening. He, who then dwelt in the home near by, but who now has drawn "a little nearer to the Master of all music," while his dust sleeps in Mount Auburn —he loved such tones, and rung them again in his own mellow numbers,—

"Low and loud a ! sweetly blended,
Low at times ar loud at times."

For was it not while lying wakeful in the inn of the "quaint old Flemish city," listening to the bells of the market-place, that the genius of Memory arose and threw wide her many-folded doors! In his verse are stirred the tongues of many bells:

"O curfew of the dying day,
O bells of Lynn!"

. . . . . .

Mournfully, solemnly,
Pealing its dole,
The curfew bell
Is beginning to toll."

Chimes out of the Middle Ages,—

"Bells that ring so slow,
So mellow, musical, and low;"—

holy, half mournful tones, such as Evangeline listened to while standing before her father's doorway, shading her eyes with her hands, while the sun was descending, and "sweetly over the village the bell of the Angelus sounded." So, also, is Millet's picture like a poem, "half rustic, half divine,"—a silent strain, like that which goes beating its hallowed way through hearts that are lowly,—

"With whom the melodies abide
Of the everlasting chime."

XI.

What lover of song can talk of bells and not remember Schiller, with his well-conned poem, elaborate and exhaustive?—or of one less than Schiller, in breadth and in spiritual vigor, if not in refined mentality; but not in the faculty of musical and beautiful expression—Edgar Poe? He educed the orchestral capacity of our own world-wide speech—intensely and essentially a poet, if little he could

teach us. One soul may not give us all things; each brings forth his own peculiar treasure; and for lack of sustained power, dynamic force of genius and character, he has a compensating something to give. Where have we an intenser worship at the shrine of harmony and of exquisite form? Where can we hear a subtler music than he won from the bells? He is a ringer of elfin chimes the most aerial—chimes heard far aloof, or from turrets submerged by the sea, or faerie bells, like those rung by sea-nymphs in that magical play, "The Temptest." Hear them!

"Through the balmy air of night,
How they ring out with delight;
From the molten-golden notes,
And all in tune,
What a liquid ditty floats!"

Bells that are jubilant! Bells that utter rapture! Bells resonant of hope and joy! Bells that prophesy! For the bells have not alone the power of invoking Memory; they are potent enchanters; inspirers of courage and expectation. For what boy was he, who—lucky deserter from good fortune, timely re-

called!—looked back through the lights of one magical evening from his seat on the stone at the foot of Highgate Hill, upon the great city behind him, and interpreted the musical salutation of Bow Bells into: *"Turn again, turn again, Dick Whittington, thrice Lord Mayor of London!"* The hodden, kindly muse of Eliza Cook has embalmed his legend and pointed his moral:

"Be it fable or truth about Whittington's youth,
Which the tale of the magical ding-dong imparts,
Yet the story that tells of the boy and the bells
Has a purpose and meaning for many sad hearts."

A spirit in the bells, say you? Ay, if you will; but, perchance, a spirit also in the boy, or he had heard their voices, but found not their meaning.

XII.

And what of the humors of the bells? They laugh, rejoice, and make merry. There lies many a joke under their clanging tongues, and the throbbing air comes with many a ripple of mirth. Schiller closes his great poem jubi-

lantly, as his bell rises up into the belfry, and its first salutation falls on waiting ears:

"Now then, with the rope so strong,
From the vault the bell upweigh,
That it gains the realms of song,
And the heavenly light of day!
All hands nimbly ply!
Now it mounts on high:
To this city Joy reveals,—
Peace be the first strain it peals!"

And did not Hunter Duvar tell us of the baptism of the Bell of St. Œudula? and how the carnal friars made a rollicking day of it, and sprinkled the holy water with wicked leers; naming her "as she passed the belfry slips"—they alone knew why—*St. Jimima!* Hear the shouts rising from the populace, while—

"All men praised with lauding lips
The apotheosis of the bell!"

And what wild, merry, tipsy, talkative, companionable bells were those Charles Dickens listened to,—bells lending rarest delight to one of his most charming fantasies,—bells that burst out so loud and clear and sonorous, saying: "Toby Veck, Toby Veck, waiting for you,

Toby. . . . Come and see us; come and see us. Drag him to us; drag him to us. Haunt and haunt him; haunt and haunt him. Break his slumbers; break his slumbers! Toby Veck! Toby Veck! Door open wide, Toby." They drew him,—the enchanters! They drew him, as they have drawn us, till he cared not whither his feet wandered, while their summons was in his ears.

. . . . . .

"The Bells, the old familiar Bells! his own dear constant friends; the chimes began to ring the joyous peals for a New-Year; so lustily, so merrily, so happily, so gayly, that he leaped upon his feet. . . . The chimes are ringing in the New-Year. 'Hear them.' They *were* ringing! Bless their sturdy hearts! They *were* ringing! Great bells as they were; melodious, deep-mouthed, noble bells; cast in no common metal; made by no common founder; when had they ever chimed like that before?"

Not since they chimed in the ears of a poet like their celebrant, who makes his rite the more religious, and gives us another litany of the heart. Sleep well, Charles Dickens, beneath the worn pavement and the beckoning

towers of thy gray minster! They, too, call *me,* and I should like to go and stand where you were laid. The tolling from above shall not wake you; but such joyous peals as you have rung will ever fill the memory of man with delight. We love you well, great departed one! for your ringing of memory-chimes.

XIII.

"I heard the city time bells call
Far off in hollow towers,
And one by one with measured fall
Count out the old dead hours;
I felt the march, the silent press
Of time, and held my breath;
I saw the haggard dreadfulness
Of dim old age and death."

—Archibald Lampman.

But what shall we say of bells that have sterner voices; bells darkly rusted, and doomful in their notes; that answer "fiercely back" the sighs of mortals; with an angry, implacable, as well as an "impetuous strain, ringing," or, rather, clanging, "in the very bricks and plaster on the walls." For what a doleful peal was that which startled the guilty bosoms of Lord and Lady Macbeth, waking at dead of

night all that slept in the castle, when the hue of death was on Duncan's face, and "his silver skin" was "laced with his golden blood!" A victim is a terrible creature loosed in this universe, and free to appear before God!

"Ring the alarum-bell: Murther! and treason!
Ring the bell!"

It was not on Whittington's ear alone there fell the calling bells; they have borne messages of dread and doom. Think you that Lochiel shall have triumphant exit from Culloden?

"Ah no! for a darker departure is near; . . .
His death-bell is tolling!"

Such sound gave warning to the tremulous heart of the Countess Amy, for her poet makes her shudder,—

"That dread death-bell smites my ear!"

Then, before the dawning of her fateful day—

"Full many a piercing scream was heard,
And many a cry of mortal fear.
The death-bell thrice was heard to ring,
An aerial voice was heard to call,
And thrice the raven flapped his wing
Around the towers of Cumnor Hall."

And, in the Wallenstein of Schiller, we find a thrill responsive to the Fourth Henry of France, who foreboded the knife of Ravaillac:

> "The phantom
> Started him from the Louvre, chased him forth
> Into the open air; like funeral knells
> Sounded that coronation festival."

The bells! Their iron tongues seemed calling him to his doom.

With what a shudder of awfulness "even the vesper's heavenly tone smote sea and shore and the unfeeling rocks, bidding

> "The passing bell to toll
> For welfare of a passing soul,"

when "injured Constance" had been entombed at Holy Isle, and the direful conclave that had just consigned her was ascending to the lights of a summer evening. Ay, long after the stars were shining,—

> "Slow o'er the midnight wave it swung,
> Northumbrian rocks in answer rung;
> To Warkworth cell the echoes rolled,
> His beads the wakeful hermit told;
> The Bamborough peasant raised his head,
> But slept ere half a prayer he said;
> So far was heard the mighty knell,
> The stag sprang up on Cheviot fell,

Spread his broad nostril to the wind,
Listed before, aside, behind;
Then couched him down beside the hind,
And quaked among the mountain fern,
To hear that sound so dull and stern."

And how soon are all the quips and jests wherewith Death condescended to tickle his lean uncomely sides (when he became mellow and garrulous in the glow of Burns's *usque-bae*), made worse than ridiculous when that midnight monitor—

"The auld kirk hammer struck the bell!"

XIV.

Heralds, monitors, of sorrow and misfortune are they. They toll not as bells from our village towers, when they who have passed peacefully are laid in reverent quietude away. They have the note of horror. They sounded in Paris, at St. Bartholomew's, when papal vengeance fell on the noblest heads and the fairest necks in France. Their hideous clangor has sounded throughout Spain at many an *auto-da-fé*, when, with lifted cross, humanity and the Christ of humanity were insulted by the monsters of a barbaric religion, and the

father put the torch to the pile where his beautiful and delicate child was consumed. Heaven fend our world again from times like those! Dreadful bells! They rang when great London was on fire, and the winged fury that begins his circuit on sheds and returns on palaces was in full splendor of his march. We are wakened from our sleep by such doom-notes, when fear comes upon the spirit and trembling, and our chamber glares with the rolling flame that shrivels and scorches in mockery. So the poet shakes us with ghoulish bells,—battle-bells,—and bells whose shriek is, "Fire!"

"What a tale their terror tells
Of despair!
How they clang, and clash, and roar,
What a horror they outpour
On the bosom of the palpitating air!

Yet there were some tones of triumph and gratulation mingled with the lamentation of the Kremlin bell, when their beloved Moscow wilted into ashes before the torches of its citizens;—for was it not a show of defiance that Napoleon turned pale to see? Great, waste, wintry land, with its undaunted hearts! Is this the stone of offense on which nations are yet to stumble and be broken? The "loud

tocsin" told no such triumph for Prague or Poland:

"Hark! as the smoldering piles in thunder fall,
A thousand shrieks for hopeless mercy call!"

They tell us this Muscovite Empire is the greatest country in the world for bells; and that their "delicious tones, which ring at all hours of the day and night, distill their melody into the Moujik's ears from his babyhood."* So were there triumphant notes, according to our noble-speaking poet,† when the great church tower of Hamburg was in flames, and

"The bells, in sweet accord,"

pealed forth that grand old German hymn,

"All good souls praise the Lord."

And, hark! was that the tolling of a bell floating along the watery way of Venice? Yes, it was the great bell of St. Mark, bidding the conspirators rally to their work—and to their doom! In the great council hall, where hang the portraits of the Doges, we are told, by Madame de Staël in her "Corinne," that Marino is degraded. "On the space which would have been occupied by that of Faliero,

* How the Russian Moujik Lives. William Durban.
† Lowell.

who was beheaded as a traitor, is painted a black curtain, whereon is written the date and manner of his death." And Byron closes his version of the Doge's tragedy with the significant lines:

"His hoary hair
Streams on the wind like foam upon the wave!
Now—now—he kneels—and now they form a circle
Round him, and all is hidden—but I see
The lifted sword in air—Ah! hark! it falls!
. . . . . .
The gory head rolls down the Giants' Steps!"

If one is disposed to pity the victims in the *Parisina* of Byron—and the poet claims pity for his misguided people, pity dangerous to the lover of virtue—he may listen, while—

"The convent bells are ringing
But mournfully and slow,
In the gray square turret swinging,
With a deep sound to and fro.
Heavily to the heart they go!
Hark! the hymn is singing—
The song for the dead below,
Or the living who shortly shall be so!
For a departing being's soul
The death-hymn peals, and the hollow bells knoll."

XV.

And thou, dark-haunted mediæval Notre Dame! were not thy bells beloved by him who sounded the Angelus or rang for vespers, yet when he did so heard them not, save when he was in the belfry beside them;—that singular, gnomic, half-human, half-dæmonic being, who was the familiar of thy walls, thine aisles and mysterious cloisters,—thy Calaban-Quasimodo, an Ariel-soul imprisoned within his misshapen body? O, the Bells! the Bells! How says thy poet? "He loved them, he caressed them, he talked to them, he understood them—from the chimes in the steeple of the transept to the great bell above the porch. The belfry of the transept and the two towers were like immense cages, in which the birds that he had reared rang for him alone. It was these same birds, however, which had deafened him. . . . It is true that theirs were the only voices he could still hear. . . ." Can you not see him, flying up the winding staircase to the high belfry, when a great peal was to be rung, and hurrying breathlessly into the "aerial chamber" where repose his brazen aviary, with folded wings, and especially his

monstrous Mary,—regarding her with the loving attention a master gives his mettled steed when about to put him to his utmost? Ah! and then, when the ringers below drew the ropes, and the "windlass creaked, and slowly and heavily the enormous cone of metal was set in motion," how Quasimodo, "with heaving bosom watched the movement! The first shock of the clapper against the wall of brass shook the woodwork upon which it was hung. Quasimodo vibrated with the bell. *'Vah!'* he would cry, with a burst of idiot laughter. Meanwhile the motion of the bell was accelerated, and as the angle which it described became more and more obtuse, the eye of Quasimodo glistened and shone out with more phosphoric light. At length the grand peal began: the whole tower trembled; rafters, leads, stones, all groaned together, from the piles of the foundation to the trefoils of the parapet. Quasimodo then boiled over with delight; he foamed at the mouth; he ran backward and forward; he trembled with the tower from head to foot. The great bell, let loose, and, as it were, furious with rage, turned first to one side and then to the other side of the tower its enormous brazen throat, which issued

a roar that might be heard to the distance of four leagues around. Quasimodo placed himself before this open mouth; he crouched down and rose up, as the bell swung to and fro, inhaled its boisterous breath, and looked by turns at the abyss two hundred feet deep below him, and at the enormous tongue of brass which came ever and anon to bellow in his ear. This was the only speech that he could hear, the only sound that broke the universal silence to which he was doomed. He would spread himself out in it like a bird in the sun. All at once the frenzy of the bell would seize him; his look became wild; he would watch the rocking engine, as a spider watches a fly, and suddenly leap upon it. Then, suspended over the abyss, carried to and fro in the formidable oscillation of the bell, he seized the brazen monster by the earlets, strained it with his knees, spurred it with his heels, and with the whole weight and force of his body increased the fur[illegible] of the peal. While the tower began to quake [illegible]e would shout and grind his teeth, his red hair bristled up, his breast heaved and puffed like bellows of a forge, his eye flashed fire, and the monstrous bell neighed breathless under him. It was then no longer the bell of

Notre Dame and Quasimodo: it was a dream, a whirlwind, a tempest, vertigo astride of uproar; a spirit clinging to a winged monster; a strange centaur, half man, half bell; a species of horrible Astolpho, carried off by a prodigious hippogriff of living brass." Surely in all the romantic literature of Bells there is nothing to parallel with this!—vivid as the lightning, rapid as the whirlwind, invigorating to the spirit as a mountain storm.

XVI.

Many bells there are, of many chimes. We may have leisure to listen, as they sound in memory, by and by. Bells, throbbing pensively, where Owen Meredith leans out from his window in the damp night to gather the sweet sadness:

> "The sound of the midnight bells
> When the oped casement with the night rain drips."

Bells, sounding in the twilight! for, in the changing of our vision, the boy, Keats, is seen wandering at his will, toying with "songs of birds," with "whispering of leaves," and all

beguiling and delightful things,—charmed at last most of all by

"The great bell that heaves
With solemn sound."

"The antiphonal bells of Hull,"—our Canadian city, so recently desolated by fire;—as Duncan Scott has sounded them over the land in musical verse. The bells of Rome, for the crowning of Corinne, ring in my ear; and the bells of Florence that Dante heard going afar; and the bells that Marian Evans rung in her "Romola;" temple bells calling from "the old Moulmein Pagoda," as Rudyard Kipling lately heard them. I hear the chimes of Norton Bury, from the memory of her who wrote "John Halifax!" "Norton Bury was proud of its Abbey chimes." And Elizabeth Browning's knight, in the "Rhyme of the Duchess May," remembers the like sounds less pleasantly:

"He sprang up in the selle, and he laughed out
bitter well,—
'Wouldst thou ride among the leaves, as we
used on other eves
To hear chime a vesper bell?'
I sat beneath the tree, and the bell tolled
solemnly,

Tolled slowly.

While the trees' and river's voices flowed between
the solemn noises,—
Yet death seemed more loud to me."

Hawthorne, on a Sunday morning, sits watching the church-goers along the side-walks below, hearing every sound, and especially one—as "with an unexpected sensation the bell turns in the steeple overhead, and throws out an irregular clamor, jarring the tower to its foundation."

I see Longfellow on the Nahant shore. He, too, seems among the entranced ones:

"Down the darkened coast run the tumultuous
surges,
And clap their hands and shout to you, O Bells
of Lynn!"

And there, yet, is Whittier, sitting in the door of his white "Tent On the Beach," for he, too, can hear, when "the wind is lightly blowing, and the waves are silent,"

"The bells of morn and night
Swing, miles away, their silver speech."

Smaller bells, with slenderer notes;—Bryant's "bells of wandering sheep," and "sheep-bells . . . on the desert hills," with Gray's "drowsy tinklings" that "lull the distant folds;" Wordsworth hearing the bells of kine

as they go to pasture on the hills of Westmoreland.

I hear Spenser waking the bells of his "Epithalamium," to celebrate the bridal of Maia; and Tennyson, as at the close of the "In Memoriam," he awakens the echoes at the bridal of a sister:

"Begins the clash and clang that tells
The joy to every wandering breeze;
The blind wall rocks, and on the trees
The dead leaf trembles to the bells."

I see the glow in Scott's eyes, as he looks up into the face of Willie Laidlaw, from reading the newly-written sheet:

"On Christmas eve the bells were rung."

XVII.

But, ah, Time himself is a winged bell, tolling very swiftly! Space narrows; we can not give to speech all musical memories that cluster upon us, nor listen now to all the "melodious bells among the spires." We listen still, we muse, we hesitate to depart:

"The bell strikes one! We take no note of time,
But by its loss."

O ye sounding chroniclers! of what past and passing hours take ye note? What musical record make ye of the passing generations? Will ye not soon ring in the Laureate's happier time? Listen to one of the deepest strains of one of the truest poets of our age:

"This is the midnight of the century,—hark!
Through aisle and arch of Godminster have gone
Twelve throbs that tolled the zenith of the dark,
And mornward now the starry bands move on;
'Mornward!' the angelic watchers say,
'Passed is the sorest trial;
No plot of man can stay
The hand upon the dial;
Night is the dark stem of the lily day.'"

XVIII.

We were about to cry: Beat us not down, O Bells! with your doom-notes, your discontented jangling; trample us not beneath a hopeless music, in which there is no Christly mercy and compassion. But what is this you tell us, O Bells! The night is far past, and the morning is at hand. You beat the upward march of humanity; you ring the triumph of mankind! Bless you, O Bells! No longer

"toll slowly;" no longer ring mournfully; but tell Time's gladdest story—peal the fullness of its jubilee!

"O chime of sweet St. Charity,
Peal soon that Easter morn
When Christ for all shall risen be,
And in all hearts new-born!"

Ring in that millennial day, O Bells!

XIX.

I think that Charles Lamb gave us right, as well as pleasant, words when he said, among other fine sayings, that high-pealing bells make "the music nighest bordering on heaven." They solemnize the soul, and fit it for the message that comes only in our serenest, clearest mood.

"Tintadgel bells ring o'er the tide;"

and this is the word they speak—the message of "the merry Bottreau bells:"

"'Come to thy God in time!'
Rang out Tintadgel chime;
Youth, manhood, old age past,
'Come to thy God at last!'"

XX.

"O ye sweet bells of concord, fling
Your burden to the haunted air!
Ye bells of peace, a solace bring
Down to this weary world of care!
Your voices falling from above,
Like star-breathed anthems silver-clear,
Our prayerful hearts to praise shall move,
In hope of heaven's millennial year.
Your metal mouths be tuned alone
To themes eternal and sublime,—
The golden joys that have not known
The dull, corroding touch of Time.
Bespeak the souls that homeward fly,
With wings of music, glad and free,
To the pure temple of the sky,
The palace of eternity."

And soon, perhaps, the bells whose music woke anew with our existence, will signify, more solemnly, our departure. Slowly their brazen tongues will number—or more, or less—our "threescore years and ten." They will consign our lives to Memory; then Memory will hand our names to Oblivion.

Shall we not welcome, in its season, this final "cure of all diseases?" As Sir Thomas Browne quaintly and truly saith: "There is no catholicon, or universal remedy I know but

this, which, though nauseous to queasy stomachs, yet to prepared appetites is nectar and a pleasant potion of immortality."

Soon it will be time for the ringing of life's curfew:

"Cover the embers,
And put out the light."

But, beyond the darkness and the silence that shall follow—Wake! blessed chimes that usher in the new morning!—Wake! Bells of Eternity!

'Phemie:

The Story of a Child.

"'T is of a little child
Upon a lonesome wild,
Not far from home, but she hath lost her way."
—Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

THE sultriest day of the year was well advanced, and the August sun was in its languid decline, when, jaded with journeying in the heat—as I had been obliged to walk all the way from Pointz Creek—I came to the foot of the hill leading upward to the village of Ardoise, where I had an appointment at evening. A feeling of faintness and of unusual weariness oppressed me suddenly. I paused, and looked upward along the hill-road that wound to the naked top, a ribbon of yellow glaring dust. The heavy wheels of a wagon just ahead of me made the situation still more intolerable, for the dust they stirred nearly hid horses and driver from view. I regretted, also, my walking-stick, which I am in the habit of leaving

inopportunely at home, and the duster that I knew to be at that moment hanging unused in the hall, while meditating the difficulty of the ascent before me.

When the dust had cleared somewhat, and the wagon had vanished beyond the brow of the hill, I lifted the gripsack with which I was encumbered, and trudged on. But when I came to a cluster of pines at the roadside, whose branches overspread the way, the temptation to rest seemed irresistible, and I flung myself down on the carpet of brown needles, to inhale their fragrance and soothe my ear with the indefinable music that comes through their myriad tassel-harps out of the aerial deep. Reclining there, the mystic song put me into a mood of dreams; my eyes closed, or half-opening, pored on a spray of golden-rod, or a butterfly that, flitting like a white, delicate thought here and there, lit finally and poised on a buttercup. The crickets sang in the stubble; the grasshoppers went on their eccentric way around me; the pines whispered out of dreamland.

I was aroused by the sound of a slow, shuffling, dragging tread, and the muttered tone of a voice. I sat up immediately, and looked

toward the road. An old man had come into view, who was talking strangely, wildly to himself, and gesticulating with his right hand, while in the left he held his walking-stick. He drooped his head forward, and his face was shaded under a broad hat, while he sweltered in a slouching coat of threadbare black. He looked not to right or left, nor appeared to notice me, talking all the while with himself, and flourishing hand or cane—so he shuffled on, stirring the dust into a cloud before him. Just a few steps beyond where I sat he paused, leaned heavily on his staff, and with a labored, asthmatic breathing, panted and muttered as he stood. When he moved on again I heard him say, in a tone of reverie, "I shall find her, I shall find her yet!"

My curiosity was piqued by his manner and utterance; so I watched him till he had ascended the hill well-nigh to the summit; when, unwilling to have him pass from my view, I arose and hastened after him. At a perspiring gait I reached the hill-top, and kept the aged pilgrim within my vision. Having gained the point of vantage whence I could survey his movements, I paused to recover my breath, and to note in detail the features of

an extensive domain of hill and vale and winding water spread below me; for at this elevation the view was one of the most inspiring I had seen in this part of the country.

Just a little way beyond stood an old-time farmhouse, on the right side of the road, with its low hipped roof, unpainted walls, and small-paned windows. The abundance of shrubbery did something to relieve its homely bareness. A hop-vine enfolded the eastern gable and the lean-to in its thick-clustered embrace; while over the front of the house, and the porch of entrance, a mass of woodbine went climbing to the roof, as yet scarcely touched with the autumnal flame. Lilac shrubs grew wildly at the corners of the house, decaying here and there. In front were the relics of an old-fashioned garden, not nowadays very carefully tended, in which grew irregularly the flowers that delighted in the long ago. There had once flourished bachelor's-buttons, candytuft, marigolds, dahlias, lavender, and the damask rose; and there the hollyhock set up its knightly spear, like a sylvan crusader, all clustered with tinted rosettes. Between the garden and the fence that inclosed it was an ample space of green lawn sheltered with elms.

maples, and varied shrubbery; while over at the left were the moldering remains of an orchard, the gnarled limbs of which were fruited scantily.

The old man having arrived in front of this farmhouse, which stood solitary, turned abruptly, and, entering by the smaller of the two gates, walked slowly up the path to the front door. He did not enter at the main portal, however, but, passing around toward the back, disappeared. The place seemed an invitation to rest, and, in some way unaccountable, the man had exercised a fascination upon me; so I halted, came to the side of the road, and stood leaning over the big farm gate, wiping my perspiring face, and looking wishfully toward the well-sweep just inside, fancying the coolness and sweetness of that which was abundantly stored below in "the deep-delved earth."

Away at the left of the house, at the foot of a smooth grassy slope, stretched the winding waters of the creek, white and sluggish, save where it took the fires of the approaching sunset. There the poplar clapped and rustled its myriad silver leaves, and made a joyous melody; while on its bluff stood the somberer oak

and the more somber pine-tree, to give sylvan life its appropriate shadow, and to intone the graver monody of human hearts.

Nearer was an enticing syren-cluster of silver birches, on one part of the slope; while at the brow, and just beyond it, were the apple-trees, gnarled and mossy, in sprawling, irregular attitudes, looking as if they had at some time been badly frightened, and had started to run down hill. The fields around, and this yard in front of me, were brightly green, for the rain had been abundant, while the heat was recent and exceptional. The hilltop seemed benedictory; gladly I inhaled its gracious freshness. The balm of Gilead tree, that hung motionless over the big gate, though it scattered its buds no longer, like those that regaled my sense and lulled me in boyhood, brought a wave of haunted memory refining their spicy odor.

Presently the old man reappeared in the yard, and, carrying with him a bucket, came toward the well. He was a little, old man, very much shrunken, and tottered feebly, putting out his staff before him in a dim-sighted manner, as if uncertain of his way. I observed particularly his tremulousness, and a

peculiar straining and blinking of his eyes, as of one who faces a strong light. He suddenly halted, as if he had observed me, and shaded his eyes with his hand, as if to obtain a more certain view of my person; but he removed his hand directly, and proceeded to the well.

There was about him an atmosphere of refinement and good breeding, and he had an appearance of gentleness and high intelligence unusual in rural communities. Yet years seemed to have adjusted him to his rustic environment, and the polish of his nature had taken a sort of rust. His face, however, indicated intelligence and refinement, rather than force, and there was a confused sense of mental bewilderment given out from him—of a partial wrecking and paralysis of the man. Yet there was a certain stateliness of movement, with all his tremulous uncertainty, and the noble manner and fine consciousness were indicated, which are the property of the gentleman and the scholar. His spare figure gave evidence of former strength and athletic suppleness, but these were long since departed. His brow broad; his face and hands still white; his eyes the eyes of a dreamer, blue, deep-set, overhung by heavy brows, and surrounded by

many wrinkles. His ample forehead was furrowed with decisive lines, and seemed planned for meditative and philosophic thought.

A fringe of curly hair encircled his temples, and the silvery bleached crown, now bare. His locks were like clean-washed wool; his chin was covered with a fine beard, closely trimmed; his cheeks were large, but hollow and flabby; his mouth, full, yet fine. His nose was a marked feature, and gave a distinction to his now colorless face. He wore a dress-coat of faded black, which hung slackly upon him, and slouched about his knees to keep rhythm with his swaying movement. It was a face on which many years and many sorrows had inscribed their evident legends.

Let it be interpolated here that I had, during my week of rustication in the vicinity of Ardoise, an ample opportunity to become intimate with "Master Huot" (for it was by this title he was widely known),—an opportunity I did not neglect to improve. The old man admitted me to his confidence, and related to me some portion of his history. He was of French ancestry, and had come from the island of Barbadoes soon after entering his teens; and in that sunny clime some of his kindred

still survived. It thrilled him to remember the suffering and sacrifice of his Protestant ancestors, who were thrust out of France by a perfidious Catholic king; and he was not afraid, if not vain, to match the name of Puritan with that of Huguenot.

"Master Huot" was himself of a deeply religious strain, a member of the Baptist denomination. He had married a domestic woman, of gentle nature, and had settled here many years before. He had seen sons and daughters grow up about him, had buried some of them, but had lived, since the death of his wife, with his eldest son, who kept the homestead. Far and wide he had traveled, his vocation being that of an old-time schoolmaster. He loved to recall memories of that dear old time in the vale of the St. Croix; or his sojourn where the Annapolis goes slipping away among its apple-trees, in the society of his friend, Angus Gidney, who would recite to him the lays of McPherson, "The Harp of Acadia," of whom he was preceptor and patron.

I called one evening at the farmhouse, and found him alone. Following my knock, I heard his shuffling tread, when the door was thrown open, and he gave me one of his peer-

ing looks of scrutiny, and exclaimed, cheerfully, "Ah! it is Mr. Alley! Come in, sir."

He had been seated near the window, and he resumed his arm-chair at the end of the table, whereon was laid an old leather-covered volume, open page downward. I advanced to inspect it, and found it to be "Tristram Shandy." "Yes," said he, "I like sometimes to amuse myself with this fine old humorist."

"Do you," I asked, "class him with your wise men?"

"Alas! no," he replied; "I will prefer the wisdom of those who have lived well, before they wrote well—Epictetus or Antoninus, for example—or, better, Paul. But Sterne has the strain of humanity, and I may laugh with him; though the laugh dies rather querulously away when I notice his dereliction and infirmity, the hectic pallor of his life. A more pitiful death than his I do not know in the history of all mirthful men."

He adjusted his glasses, and took up the book as if to refer to it, but laid it suddenly down again, and continued:

"Weak men and erring men are in the great majority, and have numbered among them some of the brightest and most gifted of man-

kind, including some whose names were hallowed in Holy Writ. But Wisdom remains the same, a steadfast star, on which the mariner-soul must needs look if he steer rightly. It has been said that 'in the multitude of the wise is the welfare of the world,' yet it saddens us to see how solitary they stand amid the multitude who seem impervious to wisdom, or who lack the will, the art, or the leisure to be wise. Happily there is a wisdom accessible to the simple which consists in faith and obedience toward the Lord of Life. This alone we may hope, of all forms of wisdom, shall one day become the common heritage."

It became evident to me that I was in the presence of a person who, in a neighborhood where such things were not common, had the intellectual, tempered with the spiritual, life; and I had to reconcile this with certain rumors of his insanity, and the evidences I had witnessed of at least a morbid bias.

He was fond of repeating old-time poetry, which he did with a certain sonorous precision, yet with feeling and effectiveness. I can see him now, with his spectacles elevated upon his brow, his left leg crossed over his right, his head erect in unwonted stateliness, while with

his hand moving in rhythmic concert with the lines, he repeats that passage of Pope, which has in it an unusual and real pathos:

"What can atone (O ever-injured shade!)
Thy fate unpitied, and thy rites unpaid?
No friend's complaint, no kind domestic tear
Pleased thy pale ghost, or graced thy mournful bier.
By foreign hands thy dying eyes were closed,
By foreign hands thy decent limbs composed,
By foreign hands thy humble grave adorned,
By strangers honored, and by strangers mourned."*

Or, from his lips, how tenderly sounded these sweetest lines from my most heartfelt poet—lines never heard without bringing the vernal thought of youth into the heart's autumnal bower:

"O life in death, the days that are no more!"

"Down to the vale this water steers;
How merrily it goes!
'T will murmur on a thousand years,
And flow as now it flows.

And here, on this delightful day,
I can not choose but think
How oft, a vigorous man, I lay
Beside this fountain's brink.

* "Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady."

My eyes are dim with childish tears,
My heart is idly stirred,
For the same sound is in my ears
Which in those days I heard."*

I observed that he gave preference to pieces of tenderness and pathos, in which are to be felt the pulse of longing, the mingled mood of cheerfulness and mild regret—a feeling in full harmony with the revelations of this narrative—for I must remind the reader that this is a digression, and that we are still standing at the gate.

I had supposed myself the subject of the old man's scrutiny, and that he had determined to pass me without salutation; but it was soon evident that he had not observed me; for he went through the same motions, and gazed outwardly in the like manner, so soon as he had set his bucket down on the well-curb. Leaving it there, he wandered obliquely across the yard to the gate at which he had entered, and looked with a sort of anxious eagerness up and down the road, as if to note the approach of some one expected. He turned and came back to the well; and while he proceeded to lower and fill his bucket, I entered

* Wordsworth, "The Fountain."

the yard and stood at his elbow just as the brimming bucket ascended all dripping to his hand.

He started and turned, as I accosted him:

"Can you tell me, sir, how far it is to the village of Ardoise?"

He moved and answered as abruptly as one of his leisurely habit admitted; scanning me searchingly, and finding me to be a stranger, he answered courteously, but precisely:

"The matter of half a mile, we call it, sir."

"Will you favor me with a draught from your bucket? The sight of it at this instant is almost overpowering; and I concede its merits, with the writer of a popular song, as being far superior to 'the nectar that Jupiter sips.' If the sun had not done so, the sight of your cool well and 'old oaken bucket' would make me thirsty."

A faint smile rose to his lips as he answered:

"This is a draught indeed to slake a fever. My father's table was not without its choice wine, and my memory can recall the well-known flavor; yet here I have what now contents me, while I could wish that no draught less innocent might ever be lifted to the lips of man."

He soon supplied me; then, while I eagerly drank from a cup that had been hung inside the curb, he turned away his attention and scanned the road again, or looked down the sunset way filling with glory the watery vale below, straining his eyes in either direction, and assuming his former look of anxious inquiry.

"Is there some one expected, for whom you are looking?" I inquired.

He returned again to a subconsciousness of my presence, and addressed me in a tone of preoccupation:

"Ah! sir, I have looked for her long; nor can I forbear looking for her; nor can I conjecture whither she has gone. But," he added, in a tone that went straight to my heart, "she will come, some time! Surely she will come, some time!"

He spoke and acted in so distracted and mournful a manner that I was led to survey his face more critically than before. I noticed a singular muscular twitching, especially about the lips and eyes, and that wild, gleaming expression of their orbs, peculiar to the distraught, that gave me a suspicion of insanity, existing in its milder or melancholy form.

"Whom do you expect?" I queried.

"O, sir," he answered, hopefully, in a tone of greater cheerfulness, and of a childlike confidence, "it is my little granddaughter—it is 'Phemie! Ah! sir, it is most strange, and I can never account for it; but so it is, and it is one of God's great mysteries, and our most sore privation. Though seven times the buds have fallen from yonder balm of Gilead, to make the air sweet with memories of her, she has never reappeared at the door from which she vanished so suddenly. Yet I anticipate her presence momently, and feel that she may enter yonder gate, or come up the slope from the brookside—yes, even now, while I speak of her. O! can you know," he continued, with tone and manner of sharpest pathos, "can you conjecture what a parent must feel to lose a dear child so—in so mysterious a way! To miss her, sir, when she has seemed absent from your sight but a moment; to search for her—to search anxiously and long, and to renew your quest—yet never to see her again—never to know what has become of her!"

My sympathies by this time were in a state of lively commotion, and he paused, with choked utterance, to master the tumult of his

bosom. In a few minutes he resumed: "She was a precious child, sir! Though but eight summers had flown from her birth to the void and terrible day of her departure, she had woven about our hearts a holy spell, and we saw her through a mist of beauty and splendor. Where she moved there was abundant life, and all was radiance. I scarcely see life any more; but then it teemed in every sunbeam, and swarmed in every cranny. She made life and light, sir! She was the darling object of our affection. I never loved any human creature so! God, who has stricken, forgive me, if I made her my idol!

"There were two children in our home—two little daughters. My son sighed for a man-child, who might become his companion and helper on the farm, and, by and by, his successor. It is in our children we hope to survive, for our graves are sweetened by grateful memories. But some things, howsoever we long for them, are denied us; and his desire was never gratified. But little Eve, and our beautiful Euphemia—whom we called 'Phemie—did not lack love. 'Phemie was our angel-child, and we adored her. Eve was the younger and feeble—a babe—a yearling lisper,

who engaged our care, and was of our kind—clay of our clay. She went tottering uncertainly, babbling of maternity, and we reached our hands to her to save her from falling, or gathered her to our bosoms. There was a delicacy about her that excited foreboding comment. We pitied while we loved.

"But 'Phemie seemed ours, yet not wholly ours; she moved in such a joyous, undecaying atmosphere, we thought of her as of one already immortal. The neighbors saw a sign of early flitting upon the baby's brow, but they spake not so of 'Phemie. How could they see in her a bit of human evanescence, too strangely beautiful for abiding here? O! sir, if you know the language of the poets, and will cull their magical phrases, yet can you not paint the radiance of her coming, and then the sudden gloom of her departure. But he who spake of the vanishing of earth's most beautiful forms—the snowflake, the aurora, the rainbow—he would at least have understood by sympathy our woe and surprise. He spake truly, for grief had made him timely wise; and the same lore I have learned, in my season."

Willing to encourage his somewhat repe-

titious and extravagant eulogy, when that was evidently the birth of so deep an affection, I observed, as he gave me the opportunity of a momentary silence:

"Was your 'Phemie, then, so much more beautiful than Eve?"

"Ah! Eve," he sighed; "dear little cherub, that sat with wan, uplifted face, and gazed with faerie-wide eyes into vacancy, as if she saw something our eyes could not see—it seemed, indeed, as if other worlds must claim her! We loved her with a love all her own. Do you not know that each child in the household claims its unique place and peculiar affection? They do not all affect us alike. I loved her, too, and still love her. I know, also, whither she went. Sometimes, as I sat beside her cradle watching her, she inspired me with unusual and indefinable emotion—filled me with ghostly thoughts and dreamings, most unearthly, vague, and solitary.

"But 'Phemie warmed my blood, and filled all my horizon with light. Nothing ever realized so powerfully the glow and gleam of youth—the dawning life of the heart. She was of our world, yet with the glamour of an-

other world around her. Asserting that sphere where all is unfading purity and beauty, she kept her wings hidden, and held her place upon the earth—ay, without any warning until she went! Sir, she was the sort of child whom, having known, you can never forget, and of whom the deprivation is unspeakable woe. She had a spirit of absolute trust and affection; she was an embodied rapture; she was a sunbeam soul, transfused through a mold of curves and dimples. No tint or outline seemed lacking that could heighten loveliness. Never dwelt a spirit blither or gentler in a wholesomer or seemlier body. I would dwell on her praises more than a lover on those of his mistress. And, O! sir, that voice of hers! To hear her coming up yonder slope, as I have often heard her,

> "'Singing clearer than the crested bird
> That claps her wings at dawn,'

was to have experienced a delight no bird can give. Ah! it was good to listen to her!

"And, when in motion, her form was delightful to look upon. Just one glint of her sweet, innocent eyes, with the old mischief in them; just one honest peal of her merry, ring-

ing laughter; just one more sight of her flying figure, now fleeting over the grass, like the Water-of-Birds, that slips over its pebbles silver-footed at the base of the hill, or dancing a-tiptoe like the very bobolink, or the curving swallow! Ah! to see her so again, if but for a heart's golden minute! That is all I need to make me ready to go—to follow her, having had one more enticing glimpse.

"Sir, had you become sad, to enter when she was present had been a heart's tonic for you. She was no rubicund earthiness; her face had roundness and color, but her features were small and fine. She was of rarest texture; her figure of exceeding symmetry. Her full, deep-lit blue eyes were shadowed by long lashes; and the purity of her brow, contrasted with the wavy abundance of her hair, that rippled gold on neck and shoulders, seemed like a pearl enchased. A mist of amber round her showed that hair to me sometimes, flying afoot through a sea of daisies and buttercups, dancing under the trees, coquetting with the sunbeams—herself a sunbeam. She was the fleetest, lightest thing I ever saw in motion without wings; for wings, I fancy could scarcely have borne her more easily than her

twinkling feet. She was nature's child, and loved the world of open air.

"'O blessed vision! happy child!
That art so exquisitely wild!'

"Never can I think of Wordsworth's happiest lines, descriptive of child or woman, without thinking of her:

"'She shall be sportive as the fawn,
That, wild with glee, across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute, insensate things.'

"The grace of the willow, the cloud, and the evening star, were indeed hers. Then, at times, she was so sage and grave, so abundant in quaint questioning and wise remark—and, withal, so loving. How she doted on that eerie, wee sister of hers! It seemed as if she might have been Love's self, divorced in the past from Sorrow, and in the present wedded to Joy."

Again he paused, as if he had exhausted his vocabulary of admiration and eulogy. It became more evident, as he advanced, that his was a mind unbalanced, yet with a rich and

fertile fancy. To turn his thought, I said: "From what you have said I can readily conceive the beauty of her face and figure, as well as the brightness and sweetness of her spirit. But will you not now relate to me the manner of her disappearance?"

"To that mournful event I was approaching," he responded. "The dear girl had shown such signs of rare intelligence and musical ability that her parents designed for her a liberal education, and had the most hopeful expectation concerning her. She developed rapidly, was mature beyond her years, and was the pet and favorite of all. Then came the fateful day (what other can I call it?) that began our desolation. It was in the season, too, that begets our liveliest emotion—the era of hope, when the young grasses are springing, after arbutus has risen from its wintry sleep and faded, and when the dandelion has covered our hillsides with its minted gold, and the stars of Bethlehem have sprinkled the meadow. The green was living green; the lilac bushes, yonder at the corners of the fence, were coming into blossom; while the balmy buds from the great tree over the gate fell down where we stand, filling the air with bal-

sam sweetness. The warm breeze toying softly with its leaves made them to rustle and catch the changing lights of a sun clearer, more delicious than on this sultry day; when, right here, under the shelter of its branches, I saw 'Phemie and baby Eve together, the elder leaping and playing around the younger, who threw up her little hands, crowing with the glee of infancy, both brightening in the glory that fell around them. I sat, watching from the porch. Eve caught the loose leaves and mingled wild flowers with which her sister had filled her lap, as she sat on a shawl spread over the grass, and tossed the sweet baubles aloof, crowing aloud, and giving, now and again, a shrieking emphasis to her sweet baby-babble. I saw 'Phemie weave a wreath of lilac leaves and blossoms, and put it on her sister's tiny head; then she danced and spun about her in a whirl of delight, as if her sister had been a Queen of the May, or she herself a servitor of Titania. Such loving, mirthful attendance I joyed to look upon; it was a part of nature's general loveliness. Then she started on a stag-race down the green slope, and passed from my sight. It was so I saw her for the last time.

"I thought she would be flying back again in a few minutes; and directly, I entered the house. Her mother came, looked out of the window, and, missing the child, said: 'I wonder where 'Phemie has gone? I see that little Eve is sitting alone.' I looked out and saw the baby sitting in her eerie silence, and every appearance of mirth was gone. I sat near the window for a time, still watching the little one; then, when I began to wonder that 'Phemie had not come back, I went out to look for her. I was ever restless, sir, if she was not in my presence.

"I went out behind the house, shading my eyes from the afternoon sun, that I might look down the slope to the brookside, whither she might have gone for other leaves and blossoms; but I saw no living thing, save a solitary crow, that flew over the meadow, and, lighting on a fir-tree top, sat silently looking.

"I re-entered the house, when her mother asked if I had discovered her. 'Nay,' I said, 'she was nowhere in sight.' 'Where can the child be?' she queried, in an anxious tone. 'It is not like her to leave baby so long.' 'I think she may have gone down to the brook after her father,' I replied; 'I think he is there, for I

heard the sound of his ax clipping among the alders.' So I sat down again by the window, watching Eve, and thinking that 'Phemie would soon come to her. Presently I heard a little cry, and I went out to cuddle her and to fetch her in, for she was getting fretful. However, it seemed pleasanter outside, and I dallied with her till she was pleased, then crooned and cradled her in my arms till she fell asleep; then I laid her down on the shawl, and went round to the back of the house once more to look for 'Phemie. I saw my son coming up the slope, his ax over his shoulder—the shifting blade of which glanced the beams of light, for the sun was low; but 'Phemie was not with him.

"When he had arrived, and learned of 'Phemie's disappearance, he went back immediately to look for her; while I carried Eve into the house and hushed her to rest in my arms, for I had need of quieting more than the babe. Her mother, too, wore a look of anxiety she strove to conceal, and went about her household cares, drawing the tea and laying the cloth for supper. Mary was a sweet and patient woman, and the quiver of her lip or the rising of a tear, in time of grief, usually

betrayed her emotion. The baby slept placidly as a sunset lake, with a star like a smile in its waters. The gray cat sat purring gently on the hearth rug, and sometimes seemed to look up at me inquiringly. On the hob the tea steamed, and sent out its fragrant odor, while the tall clock sounded distinctly its measured tick. The sunset faded; deeper and deeper grew the shadows; an hour passed away, and then another. We sat and waited, and still we heard no footstep.

"'I wonder why Robert does not come with 'Phemie?' sighed her mother, in a tone of pained surprise. 'It is growing very late.' Just then we heard his foot on the threshold. He entered, pale and ghastly, and staggering as if from a heavy blow. There was no disguising that message of grief and fear. 'Robert!' cried his wife, 'what is the matter? Where is 'Phemie?' 'I have not found her,' he faltered, in a stifled voice. 'No one has seen her in all this neighborhood to-day. We must call out the people; we must search the woods —the creek!'

"O, sir, you can not imagine, nor can I describe to you, our consternation—the anguish, the dismay, that oppressed us. The mother

uttered a shrill cry, and sank down. Supper had long been ready, but on the board it was left untasted. Suddenly I found myself in solitude. I laid the little Eve in her cradle. Happily she slept; and, leaving her, I went outside. I could see no human shape, and could hear no voice, save that of the brook murmuring in the hollow with prophetic distinctness in that still world of trance. The sky was clear, and a few soft stars were mirrored in the creek. I heard the sharp barking of a dog somewhere beyond its waters. Ah! what a disturbed heart was mine on such a tranquil night! Could the world, indeed, be so changed for me and mine in a few hours! The shadows crept ever lonelier round me. I went inside again, and sat, listening to the ticking of the clock, the breathing of the sleeping babe, and the simmering of the kettle on the fire—for still I kept the tea in readiness, in hope of a possible happy return. Alas! what a thing it is to have become old and helpless! I could do nothing but sit, the prey of torturing thought, while my unhappy children, in the company of the aroused neighborhood, had gone out in search of our lost darling.

"Soon after midnight I heard the sound of

approaching footsteps. It was Mary, draggled and dejected, coming to look to her baby. She entered, softly weeping, and said: 'They have not found her, and I can go no farther. I am of little use in the woods.' We sat and waited through the awful hours together. Little could we say. Sometimes a low, half-smothered cry would escape her—' 'Phemie—O, 'Phemie!'—but she sat and wept silently. All that night her father wandered in his wretchedness, calling through the woods—' 'Phemie! 'Phemie!' and to the hoarse voices of stout men the hills echoed, ' 'Phemie!'—but she never answered to their call. Hopefully at first, and then despairingly, they uttered that cry, but in vain.

"Day after day they renewed their quest, and every foot of the wilderness, and the country round was tramped and beaten over; but, in life or in death, they never found her, and no man to this day knows where she went."

The mad fire burned in his eyes, and, raising his voice, he exclaimed, passionately, "Sir, she never came, nor have we ever heard of her till this hour! O empty, lonely world! O God! if we could only have known! She was fit for heaven, and the angels have claimed her; she

was God's child! Yet if he had called her, and taken her, in our plain sight, and we had heard her adieu, and seen the saintly smile of the dying, we might have been more reconciled to let her go. We would have looked out to the sunset, and down to the meadow in its early green, and, in our thought, she would have become a part of that

"'Loveliness
Which once she made more lovely,'

and we would have enshrined her in that radiant Valhalla of Love, to await the immortal greeting.

"But, O! sir, to lose her so! We could not believe we had lost her! Where could she have gone? No swampy glade, no tangled thicket, no hidden nook or wilderness recess—no, not one hollow place, or well, or stream, in all this region but has been searched for her again and again; yet never so much as a ribbon, or shred of lace, or tatter of her little dress, or a bit of lint or floss, or strand of golden hair, has any one found. The bird in his flight leaves a plume behind upon the nest; the lamb, pressing through brambles, leaves a woolly figment; but she in her passing left no sign.

"The Angel of Life gone, the Angel of Death came instead, and our desolate house was made more desolate. The babe faded into that realm to which, even from the first, she seemed to belong, and where our tender children, having safely entered, seem to us babes eternal—the ineffable and unchangeable. The heart-broken mother waned, and soon followed her child. Three years the grass has crept in springtime over the longer, beside the shorter, grave in Ardoise Churchyard.

"Then, Robert having to be abroad during the day, I was left much in solitude—and you know, sir, solitary life is not good for us if we are confined to it closely. But always I have felt as if she was near, and I have been in the mood of expectancy. Still I look for 'Phemie's coming. If I fancy a light tap comes on the door, quickly my heart leaps up, and I say, 'It is our darling!' When I take my slow way up yonder slope, in some evening of early October, when the far gleam lingers in the west, growing ever dimmer, and the young moon hangs above the hill, and the short, thick grasses grow dark and cool—then, while a feeling of mingled hope and longing takes possession of me, I dream I see her coming

towards me, and I reach out my aching arms to enfold her!

"Sometimes, when the wintry shadows have fallen early, and I sit lonely, waiting for my son's return, I brighten up the fire and set the table freshly, as if for a guest; then I start up, half-believing that I hear the sound of her light feet on the crispy snow outside.

"What delays her? She must know the fireside awaits her; that here linger her sad father and the lonely old man that loved her so—who still loves her!"

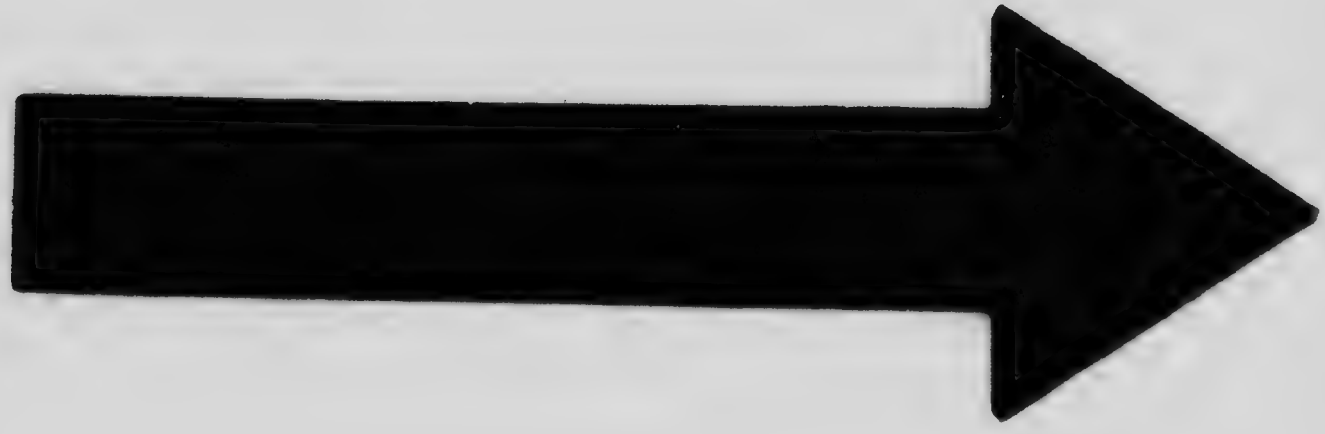
He paused, gave me a piteous look, and resumed: "O, sir, she must come—she must come, some time! Yet where can she have gone to have staid so long? Surely no ill can have happened to her. No gipsy band was known to have been in the neighborhood; and she must, if seized and taken by force, have uttered her cry; yet no one heard it. No allurement on earth could have tempted her loving heart to leave us. Had she fallen into them, the waters of our many-winding creek could not have borne her out to sea—somewhere, in cove, or on outlying point, or along muddy shore, the receding tide must have left her. Somewhere, in brake or bush, on knoll,

or in hollow, we must have found her, if near us she had perished.

"Sir"—and the muscles about eyes and mouth twitched, while his voice became shrill, and the gleam lightened his eyes—"How can she have perished? It is quite impossible!"

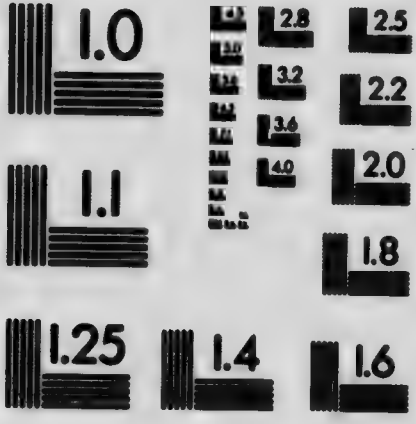
Then, while his face brightened, his voice sank to an intense whisper: "I believe she is alive! I know she is! I have seen her! Many a time, just at sunset, have I beheld her flying figure down by yonder shore. She has skipped airily along, just as she used to do in the years before she went away; and as she has gone before me through the furze and alders, I have seen the dancing gleam of her garments, and her golden hair; but before I could reach her she vanished away. She is our Kilmeny, and she haunts yonder slope and shore! Often, in calm summer evenings, I hear her away down by the brook, with snatches of song and wild aerial laughter. But will she not come back to be at home with us? Loving heart that she is, why does she not come to me, who so long for her?"

His plaintive voice ceased, and, with an air of dejection, he returned to the gate, and surveyed the highway, whereon no creature was visible.



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



APPLIED IMAGE, Inc

1653 East Main Street
Rochester, New York 14609 USA
(716) 482 - 0300 - Phone
(716) 288 - 5989 - Fax

As I sauntered on toward Ardoise village, musing how thought so similar should come to poet and madman, I crooned the ballad of that "sweetest thing that ever grew beside a human door:"

"Yet some maintain that to this day
She is a living child;
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
Upon the lonesome wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along,
And never looks behind,
And sings a solitary song
That whistles in the wind."

Vernal Notes.

I.

"Hark! 'T is the bluebird's venturous strain
High on the old fringed elm at the gate—
Sweet-voiced, valiant on the swaying bough,
alert, elate,
Dodging the fitful spits of snow
New England's poet-laureate
Telling us Spring has come again."
—T. B. Aldrich.

I AWOKE this morning to the silver flute of the robin, as that industrious minstrel descanted of freedom and cheerfulness in the bare apple-tree outside my window. How my past and present in the very ether of love were blended by that artless, reassuring strain! In the old lyric measure he seemed to be repeating the enamored Hebrew's rhapsody, and saying: "Now, indeed the winter is over and gone; the snow has departed; ceased are the chilly rains. Softly, newly green is the earth; the elm and maple are putting forth their ten-

der leaves; in the fields you love the flowers reappear; the time of the singing of birds has come. Be glad! for the violet is in its olden scented nook, and the arbutus is alive, and like a new-born infant creeps on the floor of the forest." How can my heart fail responsive to such a call! The season that wakens all things vital, with its indefinable charm is upon us. Somehow it is enough for us that spring is at hand. What if we are depleted by the days of darkness and storm? We will be dejected no longer! The sap of the world bubbles up, the blood of the heart warms, the ichor of joy oozes at a thousand pores; the first faint shows have the prestige and bespeak the fullness of the well-bloomed summer; we smile, for we know the pageant that is at hand. Soon shall be enacted that magic seen and spoken so aptly by the poet of the South:*

"Spring, with that nameless pathos in the air
Which dwells with all things fair,
Spring, with her golden suns and silver rain,
Is with us once again.

Out in the lonely woods the jasmine burns
In fragrant lamps, and turns
Into a royal court with green festoons
The banks of dark lagoons.

*Henry Timrod.

In the deep heart of every forest tree
The blood is all aglee,
And there 's a look about the leafless bowers
As if they dreamed of flowers.

Yet still on every side we trace the hand
Of winter in the land,
Save where the maple reddens on the lawn,
Flushed by the season's dawn;

Or where, like those strange semblances we find
That age to childhood bind,
The elm puts on, as if in nature's scorn,
The brown of autumn corn.

As yet the turf is dark, although you know
That, not a span below,
A thousand germs are groping through the
gloom,
And soon will burst their tomb.

Already here and there, on frailest stems
Appear some azure gems,
Small as might deck, upon a gala day,
The forehead of a fay.

In gardens you may note amid the dearth
The crocus breaking earth;
And near the snowdrop's tender white and green,
The violet in its screen.

But many gleams and shadows need must pass
Along the budding grass,
And weeks go by before the enamored South
Shall kiss the rose's mouth.

Still there's a sense of blossoms yet unborn
In the sweet airs of morn;
One almost looks to see the very street
Grow purple at his feet.

At times a fragrant breeze comes floating by,
And brings, you know not why,
A feeling as when eager crowds await
Before a palace gate

Some wondrous pageant; and you scarce would start,
If from a beech's heart
A blue-eyed Dryad, stepping forth, should say,
'Behold me! I am May!'"

II.

Ye who put your faith in visions of the Muse, and of such revelations of musical goddesses as Thalia, Urania, or even the Scottish Coila, listen to the story that I shall tell you:

Your would-be entertainer—perhaps your brother of the quill—had a singular *rencontre* not long since, when he had gone out for an evening's walk, hoping to get from the hand of nature's sweet apothecary a fresh bottle of ozone. While his nerves were being toned, and his chest was being expanded, and the

knots and nettles were being taken out of him, whom should he see crossing the pasture knolls wherever their mossy nebs were stuck above the snow (for this was before the advent of June's leafiness, and an extraordinary rainy season, so that there was not so much as one green blade) but a solitary, fagged, and bedraggled maiden, who was nevertheless wildly, bewitchingly beautiful. Tired, though she was, and dispirited, I never saw a fairer face, nor a more queenly bearing; cheek and brow showed the rose and the lily, and her disheveled locks the thready gold, where its abundance fell over her white neck and shoulders. Noting, under all her weariness, her sylphid shape and native airy movement, quite unlike any of our village maidens, he drew up and accosted her. "Gentle lady, may I bid you a good evening, and inquire whither you wander so far from the public way, and why you are so strangely clad?" Fixing her eyes on him—eyes so wildly, wonderfully lightsome and beautiful, he had never dreamed of such—she answered him in accents as clear and musical as any he ever heard: "I love the wilderness; it is my home. I steal harmlessly into quiet dwellings; I wander over old bat-

tlefields; hover above the cataracts; crown me with wreaths of pine and maple; track the raftsmen down foamy rivers, and the voyagers into the Far West; I leap with glad children, and dance in groves with light-hearted maidens; I haunt many places, from the prairies to the lakes, and the Laurentian River; but I build my house among green leaves. I am the Canadian Muse, banished from my native country and wandering down to the Acadian lands, to the shores that answer to my beloved hills and forests. Truly, I have found the land,—what I had heard of its being,—a choice region of varied loveliness. No wonder if men love it; and from all other places whither they have strayed turn their footsteps back, that they may once more behold it!" Would you not, reader, have been astonished, as was Felix?—who replied: "But you have passed the boundary of the country that claims you, and are now in a strange, though a goodly and noble, land, albeit it once formed a part of your cherished Acadia. Why, dear lady, have you left that youthful nation, just now in its hopeful spring, free and unimcumbered, where, if ever, the native Muse should be entertained?" "Alas!" she faltered,

—the tears rushing to her eyes, while she looked so lovely in her grief I longed to soothe and comfort her; "I have been discouraged. All is beautiful without, and the soul within me reflects that beauty; but it is not enough,—my soul hungers for approval and human sympathy. Yet the poet is a thing apart, by the constitution of his nature, and the force of a will stronger than his own;* and so it follows that men will look askance and strangely at him. Lacking all other occasion, they call this almost a crime, that he is a forsaker of his kind, and much by himself. Then, where is the poet who is content to sing long for singing's sake, who wishes to be heard of none, and who sorrows not at despite and cold dis-

*"Men consort in camp and town,
But the poet dwells alone.
God, who gave to him the lyre,
Of all mortals the desire,
For all breathing men's behoof,
Straitly charged him, 'Sit aloof:'
. . . . . .
Yet Saadi loved the sons of men,—
No churl immured in cave or den;
In bower and hall he wants them all
Nor can dispense with Persia for his audience."
—Emerson.

suasion? I have flown from long neglect. Besides, there has recently come from abroad a spirit called Scientific Criticism, that scorns me, proclaiming that I am inconsistent and out of harmony with the time. I have been instructed that there is no need of me; that, indeed, my presence is anomalous and not desired, or desirable; that nothing distinctive exists in my character, and nothing heroic in my spirit. We want dissecters, engineers, analysts, not orators or poets. The earth is to be ripped up, re-examined, reconstructed; not talked about, ever so beautifully. And what—I deemed they said—is this Canada, anyway, but an extension of England; and what do we presume to have to ourselves, and from ourselves, alone? Are we not well provided for, if poetry is desired? Can we hope to excel Shakespeare or rival Milton?—and it is folly to seek for less. We are to expect no native, no individual voices; or to drown them in the heartiness of our mocking dispraise. There are no birds singing among these trees, no flowers blooming in our fields, but British bards have sung them better than can any fictitious native muse. Besides, we have of song a sufficiency; the boboiinks have

long ago had their caroling season; now let them betake to the rice-swamps and feed themselves, while we who have leisure for such things reawaken foregone melodies. So, what have I and my followers to hope for? We are to be ignored; or, if attention is called to us, we must be objects of mistrust and disdain. There is my friend, Davin, who told me that he pleaded in the House at Ottawa for my favorite, Lampman, that, being in the government employ, they might award him an office more congenial to his mind, and affording him more leisure. But they said: 'Are not his wares on the market, in competition with others? We can not afford to bestow patronage; there are too many to claim it. Who is to decide upon merit? Roberts might come forward with his claim, and Campbell, and Scott; and who can tell where this thing will end?' So, henceforth, there is commended to me, on native ground, nothing save self-suppression; while that ground is being preempted in the interest of a certain canonized spirit, known as Epical Antiquity; and men are to be instructed to admire more wisely, and to distrust their own ability to produce worthy of admiration; but rather to devote

their paralytic energies to the payment of a well-known debt due the elders of song. So, as it is in my nature to vanish from men whose words and deeds are harsh, and whose hearts are cold, I have fled from my country and am seeking the South, in hope of a blander, more cheery, and open welcome." I moved forward and grasped her hand: "Lady, go no farther! Whom could I more gladly meet with? If you had not another friend in the whole of creation, you may behold one in me." So I brought her with me into the village; and, reader, this fair being, whom I have learned to love, at least as a sister, is entertained at my home; while I am more and more delighted with her. For the present, she will not leave me; nor will she go farther South, until she finds the iron powers can not be propitiated. Like Dante, it may be her doom to wander in exile; yet, like him, she has a longing to return home, if she can do so honorably. So, if the gentlemen above Ottawa, and elsewhere, whose frowns sent her away, will make the fair amende and give her a smiling welcome, she may consent to return. And if the Society of Canadian Letters at Montreal will remit half her car fare, Felix will furnish the residue,

and will put her in their hands in good flesh and with unimpaired beauty.

III.

MARCH.

(IN THE SOUTH.)

From Theophile Gautier.

Yet where changeful man is found,
Nature keeps her ancient round:
March, while laughing at our cares,
Silently the spring prepares.

Slyly, ere the daisies peep,
From their coverlet of sleep,
Comes the former of the buds,
Chiseling their golden studs.

Cunning dresser! on he goes,
Under vineyard, orchard-close;
With his swan's-puff snowily
Powders every almond-tree.

Nature in her bed reposes:
He goes down among her roses,
Laces all their new buds in
Corsages of velvet green,

While he solfeggios sings
To the blackbirds,—lo! he flings
Snowdrops to the greening meadows,
Violets to the purpling shadows.

By the side of cressy brook,
Where the stag with startled look
Ceases drinking, he compels
Scented lilies' silver bells.

Rude without, but deft within,
He hath arts our love to win;
Winter's hand he gently looses,
Jocund guests he introduces.

Soon—his secret work complete—
April's coming he doth greet:
"Dearest Spring!" he, smiling, says,—
"Bring in your delightful days."

IV.

O Voice! that of old we heard, singing this song of the hopeful season,—

"The winter is over and gone,
The thrush whistles sweet on the spray,
The turtle breathes out her soft moan,
The lark mounts and warbles away."

Among all the sounds for which we wait and listen shall we never hear thee more? Will thy peculiar tone, that before we never lacked, still be missed by us; and with it shall not the Spring have lost something of its ancient melody? And thou, to whom that voice be-

longed,—shall we look upon a new garnished world, and into yon crystal cup of the sky, brimming with glory and delight; shall we see the swallows come again, look into the face of the dear dandelion, the arbutus, and the rose, and behold the gamboling of the young lambs,—

> "And the green lizard and the golden snake
> Like unimprison'd flames out of their trance awake;"

yet see thee no longer? This beautiful world was ever dear to thee, and the spirit of the springtime was ever in thy heart, even when thy days were hinting upon the "sere and yellow leaf," and the first flakes of Time's winter had begun to visit thy brow. Thou wast a mother beloved, rich in all the goodliness of life and the joy of being; the voice of the brooding dove was ever in the land while thou didst hover over that nest we call—Home. Thou didst not lose out of thy life that sensible charm which is never lost out of the inexhaustible universe: we shall not deem that thou could'st ever cease to look and listen, to feel and to reflect. Thou hadst the soul of a poet, living out thy years in silent accumulation of thy sentiments and emotions; thou hadst the

brave and buoyant heart, and, though thou didst not bespeak them, all gentle thoughts and memories, all beautiful imaginations did wait upon thee and were thine.

But O, it is so strange to miss thee now! The spring comes, but thou comest not.

"The south wind brings
Life, sunshine, and desire,
And on every mount and meadow
Breathes aromatic fire;
But over the dead he has no power,
The lost, the lost he can not restore;
And looking over the hills I mourn
The darling who shall not return."

Thy grave, mother, was made at the threshold of the spring, and after a sadder and more tempestuous voyage than we deemed we might have taken together. The red clods of that Acadian hillside, with the white of Easter lilies, and of untimely April snows, were mingled together over thy quiet bosom; and now around thee the grasses and flowers thou didst love are springing.

V.

"'T is past; the iron North has spent his rage;
Stern winter now resigns the lengthening day;
The stormy howlings of the winds assuage,
And warm o'er ether western breezes play.
. . . . . .

Loosed from the bands of frost, the verdant ground
Again puts on her robe of cheerful green,
Again puts forth her flowers; and all around
Smiling, the cheerful face of spring is seen."

So sang the young poet of Kinnesswood,* filled with the joy of vernal seasons gone; while his wan face and wasted figure, from which health had departed forever, gave emphasis to the plaint of his expressive muse:

"Thus have I walked along the dewy lawn;
My frequent foot the blooming wild hath worn;
Before the lark I 've sung the beauteous dawn,
And gathered health from all the gales of morn.

. . . . . .

Now, spring returns: but not to me returns
The vernal joy my better years have known;
Dim in my breast life's dying taper burns,
And all the joys of life and health are flown."

Spring never comes to me but with the memory of that Scottish minstrel,—pathetic in his song as in his fate; a memory sweeter than the wild flowers that spring in the Portmoak Churchyard, where his grave was made and his cenotaph reared. They tell us that "he was pious and cheerful to the last;" and that in the Bible, found lying upon his pillow,

* Michael Bruce.

were found marked the words of the prophet: *"Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him."* His were twenty-one golden and fragrant years.

I think of one who resembled him, in his longing, his pious resignation amid dire distresses,—if not in his gift of song, so unadorned, so simple and sincere;—John McPherson, the consumptive Acadian schoolmaster, who, amid the rigors of a Nova Scotia winter, with the snow sifting through the chinks of his miserable cabin, sang his "woodnotes wild," with something of the sweetness and artlessness of a Bruce, or a Logan, and uttered a chord of the strain unutterable in his "Longing for Spring:"

"I long for spring—enchanting spring!
Her sunshine and soft airs.
That bless the fever'd brow, and bring
A balm to sooth our cares;
I long for all her dear delights,—
Her greening forest bowers,
Her world of cheerful sounds and sights,
Her song-birds and her flowers."

While the "brumal king" has maintained his rude dominion, the poet has not been unmindful of his permitted delights,—albeit in his

case largely imaginative,—he can not longer restrain his desire for warmer airs and milder skies:

"Then while the snow drifts o'er the moor,
And drowns the traveler's cry,
The charities of poor to poor
Go sweetly up on high;
Then, while the mighty winds accord
With Mind's eternal lyre,
Our trembling hearts confess the Lord
Who touch'd our lips with fire.

Yet give me spring—inspiring spring!
The season of our trust,
That comes with heaven-born hope, to bring
New life to slumbering dust;
Restore, from winter's stormy shocks,
The singing of the birds,
The bleating of the yeaned flocks,
The lowing of the herds.

I long to see the ice give way,
The streams begin to flow,
And some benignant, vernal day
Disperse the latest snow;
I long to see yon lake resume
Its breeze-kissed, azure crest,
And hear the lonely wild fowl boom
Along its moonlit breast.

Ah, I remember one still night
That blessed the world of yore,
A fair maid, with an eye of light,
Was with me on that shore!
I look upon the same calm brow,
While sweeter feelings throng;
She, wedded, sits beside me now,
And listens to my song.

The robin has returned again,
To rest his wearied wing,
But makes no music in the glen,
Where he was wont to sing;
The bluebird chants no jocund strain,
The tiny wildwood throng
Still of the searching blasts complain,
And make no joyous song.

The plowman cheering on his team
At cheerful morning prime,
The milkmaid singing of her dream
At tranquil evening time;
The shrill frog piping from the pool,
The swallow's twittering cry,
The teacher's quiet walk from school,
Require a kinder sky.

O month of many smiles and tears!
Return with all thy flowers!
Come, with the light of astral spheres,
To gild Acadia's bowers!

Young children go not forth to play,
Life hath no voice of glee.
Till thy return, O genial May!
Bring back the murmuring bee."

VI.

I lift my eyes from this rustic volume, with its tattered and faded garb, repeating over again this early song of my loved Acadia:

"My cheek is wan with slow disease,
My heart is full of care,
And, restless for a moment's ease,
I pine for sun and air.
. . . . . .
I long to see the grass spring up,
The first green corn appear;
The violet ope its purple cup,
And shed its glistening tear."

Simple and unpretentious songs; not the noblest, not the most ornate, the lovers of the spring have sung; yet they touch me, for they are the product of genuine emotion. I have tomes of greater elegance, and strains transcending these in lyric fire, evincing a more cunning art and a subtler hand, yet no deeper sincerity; for the masters, and the apter dis-

ciples I secure the incense of praise, when I bring them out before my friends. But in solitude I look upon this homely and neglected book, you may despise, and a tear falls unbidden. My heart turns back to this forgotten muse of the wilderness, who restores the hopes and dreams of my youth; and whose humble ambition it was to inspire some happier minstrel, who should "strike the harp of Acadia with less feeble hands." His notes come to me, like the voice of the cuckoo in spring, with something of the primitive sweetness and plaintiveness of songs of an elder time.

Here was one who truly longed for the spring, and who had greater reason than some poets have had for this longing; for was he not doomed to a miserable pallet, and to the spitting of his life-blood, throughout the melancholy winter, and to the wasting of the flesh, while through the rifts of his wretched unclapboarded cabin the snow sifted upon his coverlet! An Acadian minstrel, say you, of the nascent tribe, whose voice is newly tuned after the rude shocks of a Nova Scotia winter; whose song is rather primitive and curious, but not otherwise remarkable. This will do for romance. Literally, a poor, sick school-

master, with a turned head, and ambitions hopeless of any realization; a dreamy, helpless man, with a wife and child depending upon his life;—one not very dollar-wise, without the traditional silver spoon, and living in a new, unbroken country, crude and provincial, wherein the chief problem must be how to keep the literal wolf from the door, and to bar out hunger and cold. To get and keep a roof over his head, and to get a crust ahead against the day of starvation, while he sought to instruct the rustics of the neighborhood, sometimes against their will,—this was his sufficient task; but a poet he must deem himself, for this at heart he was, and, pity's sake! would there and then devote himself, soul and body, to the Muses! Indeed he never surrendered this dream of childhood; yet, though he did a deal of pining, most of his songs are full of a reasonable trust and cheerfulness. Poesy was the one star set in his sky, which went not down behind the dark wall of the forest until the sinking of that other star which was his life. The guerdon that brings ease and luxury, or even comfort, time could not on him bestow. Let us not harshly blame him.

"The light that led astray,
Was light from heaven."

So it is I hearken back to catch again a few snatches of his tearful song,—his phœbe-note at dawn, preluding a rapture-chorus yet to be heard from minstrels more complex and various,—hinting at art's maturer triumphs. His compass may have been a narrow one, and his notes few; but his song was genuine and without affectation, full of his heart and fragrant, artless in its simplicity as the joy or sorrow of a child. I hear through him the brooks and birds of my native country, where they abide remotely familiar, and filled with an indefinable sweetness. "The love of flowers," as he said, "was deep within his soul," and every "wilding of the waste" was dear to him, as a babe with eyes appealing from the bosom of his mother. Ever at this season I hear him singing of their swift return, and hail with him the budding of new leaves,—

> "Waving their Eden-scented wings
> To bid the earth rejoice."

His more than good will sought out all living creatures; he was at one with dwellers in the sylvan abodes; his most passionate yearning was toward all fair ideal existence. For is not the poet's heart a golden bowl full of life's richest wine? He is lavish of it, for he does

not fear it can easily be spent. So was this forest minstrel's spirit full of that wine—that is called Love, and he poured it out over all things. He made a sanctuary of the forest, and of the solitary heath and the secluded glen; and on the leaf-browned carpet of his native woods, where, under beech and maple and pine creeps the Mayflower,—

"Delight and wonder of a thousand eyes!"—

it made him kneel with a worship and reverence warm as any. It was a consecrating dew on his native fields; on lake and river—his own dear Lily, and the wider Rossianol (lake of the robin); on the ripples of Lahave and Liverpool, and on his Fairy Stream. Its pearls fell on the brier rose and the violet, and every blossom gilding our Acadian fields. Chide not my praise of this simple minstrel, whose heart was so pitiful to all, and whose life was so solicitous of pity. The mightiest of the bards affirms,—

"One touch of nature makes the whole world kin;"

and, if we may credit the writer of his memoirs, the story of poor McPherson "has many touches of nature."

Ah, could I have known thee, sweet and tender poet! in the day of thy longing and sorrow, I would have given thee cheer, and have taken the blossoms of thy early poesy under my most gracious and loving tendance, that they might haply have known a gladder and a sunnier growth. But thou dost belong, in thy sympathies at least, to a precious company, and art of kin with others, who, after all their sighing and despairing, as time has proved, "were not born for death;" who, like thyself, were singers and lovers of song. Thinking of thee, I seem to blend with thine his plaintive memory whose complaint of immortal pathos might have moved thee. Yes, for Michael Bruce was of thy brotherhood; and Timrod and Lanier could share thy longing and improve thine art. And another! ah, can I forget him!—who yearned also for "the delicate-footed spring," to tread out fragrance and beauty from the bosom of the awakened earth, and on his Scottish moorland invoked her in language most appealing for pathos and loveliness:

"O God! make free
This barren shackled earth, so deadly cold,—
Breathe gently forth thy spring till winter flies
In rude amazement, fearful and yet bold,

While she performs her 'custom'd charities;
I weigh the loaded hours till life is bare,—
O God! for one clear day, a snowdrop, and sweet air!"

Poor McPherson! Very gentle was his spirit, and very pathetic his history. Sad, we may think, that his rejoicing in the bloom and bı ghtness of this breathing world ended so soon; but, from his place, more congenial to song, and singing souls, it may not seem sad; for there, we deem,

"Everlasting spring abides,
And never-withering flowers."

They laid him to rest, at evening, on the bank of the beautiful Lake Tupper, whereof he sang in the sweet verses we have recited, and where his quiet figure, grown familiar, would, during his life, scarcely have startled the wild-fowl from its margin. The setting sun shone into his open grave.

VII.

"Dip down upon the northern shore,
O sweet new-year delaying long:
Thou doest expectant nature wrong;
Delaying long, delay no more."

—Tennyson.

"The iron north hath spent its rage," after a reign of unusual rigor and duration; but the

gentler season comes not with decision. We waken to the peevish day, and behold a general blankness. Everything is dowie and gray; a gray air, filled with a faint odor of budding things; a gray blanket of mist, fringed with silent rain. Through this everything is gray: the fence rails and pickets are gray; the barn in yonder field is gray; so are the apple-trees, from the bottom of each scabby bole to their topmost twigs; the stubble fields are gray, save where in low moist places a tender tint of green is coming, like a flush of delight on the earth's sensitive cheek; the little birds that come in sight are all gray, on this sober-suited morning. But this Quaker-colored season, so recluse and frugal, is full of unseen treasure, and is prelusive of a more than Roman splendor—a very papal magnificence, soon to be. Under the gray blanket of the mist the infant spring is being softly born.

I never longed more for its coming. The russet fields never seemed fairer than now, when snows and icy airs take such reluctant departure. The scents of pine, fir-wood, and budding birches were never sweeter. The jolly robin's note, the bluebird's carol, the "slender whistle" of the pewee, were never

a more joyous intoxication. To stand near the edge of a waning snow-wreath, and smell the fresh wood where the fruit-tree limb has been lopped off, brings a more spicy satisfaction than the summer airs from banks of flowers can do later.

. . . . . .

A sun-burst—a space of blue sky! How heaven rejoices with the earth! A thousand hearts break forth into singing; the woods are in full chorus. It is joy—joy—joy!

"Joy, in the laughing valleys,
Joy, in each echoing glen,—
Wherever nature rallies
And leaps to life again!"

VIII.

THE MAKING OF MAY.

What is it makes the May? The coming birds,
Brimful of mirth and gladness, as of yore,
With notes far sweeter than a poet's words;
Earth's matin bards, with immemorial lore;
The mounting sun, who will the green restore,
And wake the dandelion; the white thorn;
The delicate arbutus, seen once more;
The lengthening eve, the swift returning morn;

The bleating of young lambs; the lowing herds,
Going to pasture; the old chime of the shore,
When, wave on wave, the freshening seas inroll;
Bluest of skies; soft clouds, as white as curds?
Nay! The blithe heart, we thought would leap no more;
The gladness and brightness of the soul!

IX.

Under the boughs of the thick wood a poet sat listening. Over his head every twig hung bare from the late winter, but the leaves were coming. There was no sound but the lisping laugh of the brook that ran at his feet. He held in his hand a dainty Mayflower blossom that he had found creeping among the withered forest rubble of last year, and often he inhaled its fragrance. Suddenly he heard a musical flutter, and a chorus of the tiniest, sweetest voices his ear had ever heard, saying, "Let us come in!" And looking up he saw a multitude of little sylphid forms floating down through the branches, and scattering a shower of shining arrows, like a golden dust, harmlessly around him. "We are the children of the sun," they sang; "we are the messengers of spring. Our little arrows waken all

the sleeping buds, and call forth all the flowers. Our silken wings hover over the earth, and you have the crocus and the dandelion, and the bluebird and the robin and the swallow are suddenly here."

Under the boughs of the thick wood the poet sat listening. The limp leaves clustered motionless, and the air was like that issuing from a heated furnace. The moss beneath him was crisp and dry, and the flowers of the forest were drooping wan and faint, parched down to their deepest rootlets; while the brook, shrunken to a rivulet, was almost without a sound. The poet's heart also languished. Suddenly a breeze stirred the branches, and again he heard a musical flutter, and then a chorus of the tiniest, sweetest voices his ear had ever heard, saying, "Let us come in!" And looking up he saw a multitude of little sylphid forms floating down through the branches, and they uttered an elfin laughter as they scattered on the leaves a shower of crystal drops, that pattered on the moss and the dried leaves and danced in the waters of the brook. O how sweet and cool the earth became! The trees seemed to draw a longer, deeper breath, and the heart of the poet was

revived. The fast-falling drops searched to the parched rootlets, and the palest, tiniest flower looked up and smiled. "Let us come in," sang the sylphids: "we are the children of the air, the cloud, and the sea; at our touch the flowers of field and forest revive, and the hearts of men are glad. Let us come in, for we are come to do you good, we are come to bless you."

Under the boughs of the thick wood the poet lay listening. The first touch of autumn was upon the forest, and among the darker greens some of the leaves were resplendent. A silver rime laced the brook, and the tender flowers that loved the sun and the rain were no longer there. Suddenly he heard a musical flutter, then a chorus of the tiniest, sweetest voices his ear had ever heard, saying, "Let us come in!" And looking up the poet saw once more a multitude of little sylphid forms floating down through the branches, and tearing and scattering what seemed to be bits of a rainbow, and silver stars, which fell all around him; and some of them touched his eyes and his forehead; and at once he saw far away into the forest, where the fays were dancing, and Robin Goodfellow took off his

purple cap and laid it at his feet. Then the sylphids sang, "We are the children of the upper firmament, the dwelling-place of the clouds and the stars; we are the messengers of the Muse, and we come to bring you dreams and inspirations. We will deck for you the soberest world with light, and fill the most barren solitude with music. Let us come in, for we bring you delight, and the enchantment of our presence shall linger after we have gone away."

X.

"Sumer is i-cumen in,
Lhude sing cuccu;
Groweth sed and bloweth mede,
And springth the wde nu,
Sing cuccu, cuccu.
Awe bleteth after lomb,
Lhouth after calve cu;
Bullock sterteth, bucke verteth,
Murie sing, cuccu.
Wel singes thy cuccu,
He swik thou nauer nu.
Sing cuccu, cuccu."

—Old English Poem.

"The lily of the vale, of flowers the queen,
Puts on the robe she neither sewed nor spun;
The birds on ground, or on the branches green,
Hop to and fro and glitter in the sun.

Soon as o'er eastern hiils the morning peers,
From her low nest the tufted lark upsprings;
And cheerful singing up the air she steers;
Still high she mounts, still loud and sweet she sings.

On the green furze, clothed o'er with golden blooms
That fill the air with fragrance all around,
The linnet sits and tricks his glossy plumes,
While o'er the wild his broken notes resound."
—Michael Bruce.

"Hail, beauteous stranger of the grove!
Thou messenger of spring!
Now Heaven repairs thy rural seat,
And woods thy welcome sing."
—John Logan, "To The Cuckoo."

Thank heaven! there is a springing season —to nature—to life—to feeling—to poesy! The "Flower and the Leaf" of Chaucer belong to the Muse's spring. In his green field the daisy blooms forever; in his dewy dingles the merle and mavis sing through all the year. The birds come hastening to our woods, or gather for their flight; but, while the poet lives, they shall not desert us: "Sing on, sing on, O thrush!" The "gay green wood" wakes

the pipe of the English ballad-singer. Therein the drama of love is enacted. Under the first green mist o' the woods the merry men of Robin Hood go blithely, and Maid Marian walks, some homelike beautiful thing, never to fade.

> "Beauty in the woodland bides,
> Waiting for her wedding day.
> . . . . . .
> Hie thee hither, Bonnie May!
> Time, let not her footsteps stray
> Far from this way."*

Surely Death can not come here. Any doleful event must happen in the sodden fall, or under the wild winter branches; not when the forests are in their springtide magnificence. So we are glad of the thousand voices that cry out: "Here it is spring! Here it is spring!" Let us go to the woods. Now we are under the trees' generous cover. How hospitable is the forest! Full suits of wealthy greenery rustle on all the branches. Underfoot ran the blushful Mayflower before these leaves were out. Yet it peeps out of the moss, and crisp last year's foliage at you. See how the sun-

* Alexander Rae Garvie.

light leaps and laughs among the thousand little twinkling murmurers! How the rays are toned and softened amid these myriad green disks! There are arabesques, and grotesques—little bits of light and shade, on tiny knolls and in wee hollows, where oak and beech stretch their roots so indolently. A colored butterfly flits into light. A redbreast hops, and hops. Ha! that 's a thrush, deep in the hollow among the cedars! And that—that 's a bobolink, out in the clearing! "Hear the little tipsy fairy!" You stretch out, saying, "It is good to be here, for six hours, more or less;" and pulling the fresh manuscript of a poem—what else?—out of your pocket, read the yet unpublished beauties a friend has lent you:

"Now while the lilies glisten,
And they who sing not listen
To singers of the May,
What visions we remember,
Of murderous December,
That lived but yesterday.

Our day has had its dolor;
Now comes the happy color,
The zephyr, and the lay
Of singers used to sighing,
The truth of death denying,
The herald of the May." *

* Edwin R. Chaplin.

XI.

THE SONG SPARROW.

"When the sweet-scented cherry is snowing,
And red the maple-keys are growing,
And golden the dandelion is blowing,
I listen to hear the silence stirred
By the *sweet, sweet, Canada-bird.*

Other birds are here, and are singing sweet;
But the voices of spring are not complete
Till we hear him his golden notes repeat;—
Most liquid song ear ever heard
Of the *sweet, sweet, Canada-bird.*

O the world seems dark, and the range seems narrow
Of our life, when the wintry winds do harrow;—
But 't is changed with the note of the first song sparrow!
Our boundless, far-away dreams are stirred
By the *sweet, sweet, Canada-bird.*

His silver clarion exalts the day,
And his music charmeth evening away,—
Ay, night is broken with his glad lay!—
As if he could never enough be heard—
Our *sweet, sweet, Canada-bird!*"

XII.

Sad is his fate who has lost the relish of his life, and to whom the spring comes no more with its wonted freshness; who has so dulled and blunted the fineness of his nature, and so bedrugged the original composition of his once virgin soul, that its very element has become corrupt; and who has come to inherit "the worm, the canker, and the grief," unable to respond heartily and entirely to any of the fair and beautiful, the rapturous and holy things that make their appeal to him, and which once stirred his warmest emotions. Unhappy he who, when the wild pear is in blossom and the elmtips are greening, when arbutus glances from the wood, when the sun is setting in the sea, or a little child looks up in his face, realizes a disturbed sense of incompleteness, and thinks of that little one of God within his own bosom which once he slew; who cries aloud, like that lamenting suicide, the tablet of whose grave from Lone Mountain overlooks the Golden Gate,—*

* More than twenty years after his death, by his own hand, in a hotel at San Francisco, a volume of the poetry of Richard Realf has appeared, with a memoir by his friend, Colonel Hinton. It is the record of a life, now passionate, now melancholy, and afflicted with some sort of an intermittent moral dementia. His poetry is genuine, abounding in pure and noble sentiments; but much of it, sweetly musical as it is, is the poetry of regret and sorrow. To live obscurely, to die and to be forgotten, is often the bane of melodious spirits.

"There is no little child within me now,
To sing back to the thrushes! to leap up
When June winds kiss me; when an apple bough
Laughs into blossom, or a buttercup
Plays with the sunshine, or a violet
Dances in the glad dew—alas! alas!
The meaning of the daisies in the grass
I have forgotten; or, if my cheeks are wet,
It is not with the blitheness of a child,
But with the bitter sorrow of past years."

XIII.

Best of all the spring flowers I love our Acadian Mayflower, the favorite and emblem of that land the dearest to me; whose significant legend is, *"We bloom amid the snows."* No sooner is the retreat of winter followed by softer showers and a few days of the sun, than that darling of the forest, *Epigæa repens,* puts up her little pink face, giving the first tint and fragrance the white forest knows,—to

"Make a sunshine in a shady place."

Look down among the *débris* of last year, and there is the infant beauty, with a smile on its face and a tear in its eye! The girls come seeking, to adorn their May-day festival, the "trailing evergreen, with rusty hairs and pink-

ish white flowers, which are sweet scented."* They know the sandy soil under the pine-trees, where they grow the best. Our poets have not been silent about little Epigæa, but have named her with other of the tender children:

"The frail spring-beauty with her perfumed bell,
The wind-flower, and the spotted adder-tongue."
—Lampman.

"The Mayflowers shy
And sun-loving blossoms their way to light winning
Through strewn leaves of autumn, mute emblems of death
Perfume with their breath,
The zephyrs released from their fetters of frost."
—Weir.

"Sunshine flecked the bank
Happy with arbutus."
—Mrs. Hensley.

"Wreaths of wild arbutus round the brows of Blomidon."
—Eaton.

"Hid, like some laughing child, shy Mayflower fair,
Beneath the leafy shield, with face aglow,
Thy pearly self the coy spring's first tableau,
Come to the day and yield thy fragrance there."
—Rand.

*Sir James McPherson Le Moine.

But among all who have celebrated shy arbutus, none have loved her more than he who was to an earlier circle of readers known as Ænilla Alleyne:*

"Watched by the stars the sleeping Mayflower lies,
On craggy mountain slope, in bosky dell,
Beneath the red and yellow leaves that fell
Ere autumn yielded to bleak winter's reign:
But when at spring's approach the tyrant flies,
Our Mayflower wakes, and buds and blooms again:
Queen of the forest—flower of flowers most sweet!
Delight and wonder of a thousand eyes!
Thou dost recall a day that flew too fleet,
A hope that perished in a sea of sighs!
We all have hoped for that which might not be,
But thou, sweet flower! forbiddest to despair:
After the winter comes a spring to thee,—
And waves retire when storms to rage forbear."

The songs of birds are interpreted according to the ear and fancy of the listener, and none more variously than that of the song sparrow. One singer of the Dominion† hears in the minor mood, and renders a note of sadness:

"From the leafy maple ridges,
From the thickets of the cedar,
From the alders by the river,
From the bending willow branches,

*Hiram Ladd Spencer, of St. John, N. B. †J. D. Edgar.

From the hollows and the hillsides,
Through the lone Canadian forest,
Comes the melancholy music,
Oft repeated,—never changing,—
'All—is—vanity—vanity—vanity.'

Where the farmer plows his furrow,
Sowing seed with hope of harvest
In the orchard white with blossom,
In the early field of clover,
Comes the little brown-clad singer,
Flitting in and out of bushes,
Hiding well behind the fences,
Piping forth his song of sadness,—
'Poor—hu—manity—manity—manity.'"

Another* hears the whitethroat, with his heart all aglow with patriotic emotion, and the bird gives him an accordant refrain:

"Shy bird of the silver arrows of song,
That cleave our Northern air so clear,
Thy notes prolong, prolong,
I listen, I hear,—
'I—love—dear—Canada,
Canada, Canada.'

O plumes of the painted dusky fir,
Screen of a swelling patriot heart,
The copse is all astir,
And echoes thy part! . . .

---

*Dr. Theodore H. Rand.

Now willowy reeds tune their silver flutes
As the noise of the day dies down;
And silence strings her lutes
The whitethroat to crown. . . .

O bird of the silver arrows of song,
Shy poet of Canada dear,
Thy notes prolong, prolong,
We listen, we hear,—
'I—love—dear—Canada,
Canada, Canada.'"

A sweet singer of Maine listens in her native woods, on the headwaters of the Piscataquis, and construes the notes into some illusive summons of a spirit of fantasy:

"Far away a wood-bird sings
In the spruce's purple shade,
And I follow at the call
From a leafy cool arcade.
O how far, how clear, how pure
Is his liquid floating song!
Sweet bird-spirit, vain my quest,
Though I hear you all day long,—
'Come, come, follow me, follow me!'"
—Anna Boynton Averill.

Often, on some outskirt of the Whiting woods, have I listened to this bird,—or perchance, in the Connecticut Mills hollow, by

the lake. I have lingered long upon its enticing, plaintive note,—"O-dear-y-me! Pitee-me, pity-me!" This is the song-sparrow, one of the shyest children of the woods. Here she

"Builds her home
In the creviced mossy ledge,
And the startled red-wing flies
Like a fire-spark in the hedge;
And the dusky wood is filled
With clear songs and flapping wings,
While I follow, wrapt in dreams,
Where this lovely spirit sings,—
'Come, come, follow me, follow me!'"

XIV.

"From the wild
Spic'd with dark cedars cried the whip-poor-will."
—Isabella V. Crawford.

"Through the low woods,
Haunted with vain melancholy,
A whip-poor-will wanders,
Forcing his monotonous song.
. . . . . .
The wind moves on the cedar hill,
Tossing the weird cry of the whip-poor-will."
—Duncan C. Scott.

When one of these birds had found its way into an outlying orchard tree of the Clement Farm, at Hampden; and, forsaking his native wood close by, was, after night-fall threshing away industriously enough, I exclaimed, "There is a whip-poor-will!" "Ay," said the old man at my side, shaking his head, "I never like to hear one of those fellows. My wife believes some one of the family is going to die when he comes so nigh the house." The minstrel of evening was to him the harbinger of evil, and he found little pleasure in this innocent creature of God,—in

> "The hermit thrush and the whip-poor-will
> Haunting the wood."

This is one of the shyest of the eremites of the forest,—one of the most solitary among birds; and fortunate indeed is the lover of the feathered kinds, who, visiting them in their favorite haunts, can set his eyes upon this brooding creature of the brown back and white breast, dear to the dreamer and the poet.

I first heard the note of the whip-poor-will in the lonely Franklin Forest, riding at night, and had an uncertain glimpse of its uplifted bosom on a log or stump by the way-side. I felt the fascination that has given it

to song, and recalled the verse of Carman, who has given it such prominence:

"What ails the fir-dark slopes,
That all night long the whip-poor-wills
Cry their insatiable cry
Across the sleeping Ardise hills?"

Its peculiar thrashing note haunts the memory long after it has been heard, and seems the very expression of loneliness and sorrow.

XV.

"Beechen buds begin to swell
And woods the bluebird's warble know."
—Bryant.

Nor is the bluebird a tardy comer. He, too, has a gleesome flute to announce the season beautiful. The robin shall not sing his song alone. Though redbreast may come nearer to us, we love the little darling who has made sweetly vocal for us how many an Acadian spring!

"Because I was a tiny boy
Among the thrushes of the wood,
And all the rivers in the hills
Were playmates of my solitude;

Because in that sad time of year,
With April twilight on the earth
And journeying rain upon the sea,
With the shy wind-flowers was my birth."

While March is yet brusquely crackling the stream-side bushes, the minstrel, "with a tinge of earth on his breast, and the sky-tinge on his back," assures us the reign of winter is over, his scepter broken, and that the hill-sides will soon be vocal with the "sound of many waters."

XVI.

"It is a wee sad-colored thing
As shy and secret as a maid,
That, ere in choir the robins sing,
Pipes its own name like one afraid.

. . . . . .

Phœbe! it calls and calls again. . . ."

—Lowell.

And there is another much beloved bird that comes with April. We have heard it so often here in Maine; and never do we hear it, in these days, without recalling Lowell's exquisite lines:

"Ere pales in heaven the morning star,
A bird, the loneliest of its kind,
Hears Dawn's faint footfall from afar,
While all its mates are dumb and blind.

It seems pain-prompted to repeat
The story of some ancient ill;
But *Phœbe! Phœbe!* sadly sweet,
Is all it says, and then is still."

Does its name, though domestic, suggest the shy and lonely thing the poet makes it to be? Or is it that we knew a maiden who bore that name, and who was shy, and had an air of loneliness about her? Come, little Phœbe, or "Pewee," from thy nook of retreat by the water-course—perhaps under some ramshackled old bridge, or caved bank—and show thyself! The poets have desired thee, and the hearts of the children will leap gladly to see thee near them, darling, and to hear thee calling, "Pewee, pewee, pirch, pewee!"

XVII.

"Ringing from the rounded barrow
Rolls the robin's tune."

—D. C. Scott.

We have a settled partiality for Jack Robin. He is to us the certain harbinger of spring, and convinces us of sunnier days and greener fields, with the abundance of flowers. He does

not wait for the leaves, but comes to make fellowship with us among the budding twigs; and for his dear familiarity we love him. He may claim like praise with the English cuckoo, for, before the snow-wreaths are wasted out of the hollows, his "certain voice we hear." Out of his clump of evergreen in the cedar swamp he comes, and undertakes a nest close to our door, prepared to run the gauntlet of cats and children.

For three successive seasons a pair of robins have lodged in a crotch of the maple in front of our house. The friendly couple do not seem to consider our street a public place at all. Yesterday I had a good look at Jack and his quarters. This winged habitant appeared with a worm in his beak, gave a sidelong glance at me, and was speedily beside Jill, who received the butcher's meat from him, and dealt it out to the gaping mouths eagerly protruding above the brink of the nest. Meanwhile Jack skipped away, presumably to refurnish his larder. Does he not raise choice worms in his muck-beds? O yes, and his factor, Providence, breeds the best; and he knows the places where they lie, and how best to pluck them out. Later in the day we heard a sound of

consternation, when a whole brood—ours, not the birds'—rushed to the door, and saw the redbreasts circling round, going madly from tree to tree, uttering bird shrieks and chidings innumerable; and we also saw the reason, for there was young Jamie, with more of mirth than mischief in his eyes, hugging the tree and looking into the nest. "There! why will that boy go up and down that tree, just to frighten those birds?" Dear querist, you must put that to Him who ordained birds and boys. I think the birds will suffer little from him,—only the temporary annoyance of his teasing. They seem to know that, from the manner of their going on. How they berate him! How they screech his ticket of leave, and cry: "Jim! Jim! Go away, Jim!" in terms of which our less passionate speech is incapable. Slowly, as he commenced to descend, they plucked up courage to come at him, as if they had a mind to put out his eyes, while, with less of terror in their tones, they upbraided him resentfully for his idle concern about their affairs. They are not likely to grow into a thorough assurance that he meditates no evil, and will do them no injury, though they seem to suspect the truth that

beast and bird may grow in perfect safety with him. They shake their wise heads, and say, "O, we know *boys!*"

XVIII.

"Then from the honeysuckle gray
The oriole with experienced quest
Twitches the fibrous bark away,
The cordage of his hammock-nest,
Cheering his labor with a note
Rich as the orange of his throat."

—Lowell.

Then the feathered gentry must arrive, the plumed gay gallants. We are always glad to see *them,* too. The earth has donned her richest attire to greet them. The dandelions have spotted the grass with their golden disks before the gentleman swallow is seen revolving in the sunny air, or the oriole puts in his flashy appearance. This oriole swings his shapely cradle from some elm-tip. He does not mean his domicile shall be molested. He is too wise a bird to put his beautiful person in danger, and he takes good care of his nestlings.

All bird-sounds are sweet to me, whether

interpreted cheerfully or mournfully. The sharp call of the jay, the chatter of the blackbird, the delicate softness of the purple finch's note, the honk of the wild goose, the whistle of the robin, the harsher ejaculation of the crow, subdued by distance—all are sweet to my ear. The "whitethroat's ecstasy," the bluebird's carol, clear as ever, under the blue April sky, "the first song-sparrow brown," never fail to delight us, but all the feathered tribe contribute something indispensable to the fullness of the grand concert.

XIX.

"Hark!
Was that . . . the bobolink?
. . . . . .
The garrulous bobolink's lilt and chime,
Over and over." —D. C. Scott.

Now another visitor launches himself into song, like an arrow out of spring's quiver. Who does not know the saucy, glancing, musical fellow, since Bryant introduced him? "Robert of Lincoln is telling his name" to the smiling hills and the rejoicing meadows. What a magical tangle! What a gibberish

of melody! This bird was a favorite of Whittier's hero, Hugh Tallant:

"Of all the birds of singing,
Best he loved the bobolink."

He is also a favorite of ours. Lowell puts the bird's rapturous spirit into his song:

"Gladness on wings, the bobolink is here."

And Bryant forgets his composure, and is no longer cold, when he listens to this well-spring of music, "bubbling over with exhilaration and quivering with delight."

"Bobolink, bobolink,
Spink, spank, spink,
Nice good wife that never goes out,
Keeping house while I frolic about,
Chee, chee, chee!"

The Canadian poets have a loving acquaintance with the rollicking songster. So, Roberts, in his "Ave:"

"Again I heard the song
Of the glad bobolink, whose lyric throat
Pealed like a tangle of small bells afloat."

So, Carman:

"Bobolincolns in the meadows,
Leisure in the purple shadows."

So, Lampman:

> "Where the restless bobolink loiters and wooes
> Down in the hollows and over the swells,
> Dropping in and out of the shadows,
> Sprinkling his music about the meadows,
> Whistles and little checks and cooes,
> And the tinkle of glassy bells."

And now is the "high tide of the year." The woods run over with song; every field has its minstrelsy, every grove is vocal. Surely these joyous ones are set to give us good cheer, to banish melancholy! They are akin to humanity; we miss them, as we should some gentle, sweet-voiced householder recently departed; we feel as if part of ourselves had vanished when the naked hills stand silent, and the birds have disappeared. How aptly has Burroughs put his thought: "The song-birds might all have been brooded and hatched in the human heart, since nearly the whole gamut of human passion and emotion is expressed more or less fully in their varied songs. There are the plaintive singers, the soaring, ecstatic singers, the gushing and voluble singers, and the half-voiced, inarticulate singers."

XX.

"There, when the gradual twilight falls,
Through quietudes of dusk afar,
He. nit antiphonal hermit calls
From hills below the first pale star."
—Carman.

I shall never forget my first hearing of this songster on the edge of a thicket in the village of East Corinth. I had recently read Burroughs's account of hi:n, and was then and there enabled to verify that rare description of a strain that "realizes a peace and a deep solemn joy that only the finest souls may know." Heard at sunset, or in the quiet of evening, or with "the full moon just rounding from the horizon," its *"Spheral, spheral! O holy, holy! O clear away, clear away! O clear up, clear up!"* might render a chanting cathedral choir and the rolling pomp of an organ superfluous and vain.

That lover and intimate acquaintance of the birds, the master of Spencer Grange,* has a partiality for this songster. "How often, too," he writes, "have I not listened to the ethereal, flutelike tinkle of the Orpheus of

*Sir James M. LeMoine.

our deep woods, the hermit thrush, homeward wafted from the green domes of Spencer Wood at dewy morn, when the sun-god suffused with purple and gold the nodding pinnacles of my dear old pines and spreading elms, or at the close of those gorgeous sunsets, with which spring consoles us for our January storms! And yet, have I not been told that in Canada there were no song-birds!"

One more! We heard through the ear of naturalist and poet long ago; but we have heard also through our own. No bird song is more exquisite than that from the throat of the wood thrush, heard on the edge of the thicket at twilight.

"Call to me, thrush,
When night grows dim,
When dreams unform
And death is far!
When hoar dews flush
On dawn's rath brim,
Wake me to hear
Thy wildwood charm."

—Carman.

Evening fills her cup with its most delicious melody, and at morning the heart gives response, with Anna Boynton:

"Clear is thy message, O woodland bell,
Ringing soft in the echoing dell,
Under green arch and golden spire;
When dawn's first radiant arrow fell
Into the dim wood's dusky choir,
Thy notes uprose, nor the rising fire
Of day doth hush thy heavenly swell.

. . . . . .

Ever unspoken on earth must be
The dawn-blown message borne by thee,
Bell of the wilderness, soft and clear!
There 's a language lost and sweet, that we
May never speak in our veilèd sphere;
But thrushes sing it, and, lo, we hear!
The lilies blow, and behold, we see!"

Now, let us take reverently the sacrament of the spring; let us thank God for birds, and for bird songs.

The Minister's Saturday Evening

A Symposium.

"Blest be that spot, where cheerful guests retire
To pause from toil, and trim their evening fire:
Blest that abode, where want and pain repair,
And every stranger finds a ready chair:
Blest be those feasts with simple plenty crowned,
Where all the ruddy family around
Laugh at the jests or pranks that never fail,
Or sigh with pity at some mournful tale;
Or press the bashful stranger to his food,
And learn the luxury of doing good."

—Goldsmith, "The Traveler."

THE minister's sermon had been written, conned, and put away. The hearth was newly dusted, and its antique hollow was merry with the brightest thing in the house,—unless, indeed, "his thrifty wifie's smile" be a brighter. Usually the quiet hours that border on the Sabbath were by him devoted to sedative occupations, preparatory to the more strenuous toils of the Sabbath; he relaxed himself with music, or with dreaming over easy rhymes, after a

walk in the open air, or in casual fireside conversation. Perhaps, with him the reclusive impulse had become too powerful; for there is danger of excess in pursuits the saint and the scholar affect, and the normal life requires frequent alteration and diversion. Somewhat in opposition to the gregariousness of the time, and the predominance of clubs and conventions, he magnified the home, deploring what seemed to him its decay. It was his palladium, his especial sanctuary, his fountain of virtue; it was the hallowed center of radiant and happy calm, about which the outer world, with its shows and storms, like an immense panorama, forever rotated. A Presence made it a shrine; a vestal spirit lit its altar, and bright beings they had invoked were in joyous ministry there. Yet whatever attractions or comforts it might inclose, to all of them the transient comer was openly welcome; and he chiefly who most could need or could best enjoy them.

The place had upon it the mellowing touch of anciency. The preacher lived in the oldest house the village could boast, with a history extending back into pre-Revolutionary times. Squarely, with naked weather-worn walls it stood, in the vicinity of a fort, long since dis-

mantled, the rubble of which protruded from the thin soil; and throughout it had what has been termed "a general flavor of mild decay." On a little eminence, the lights of its windows and its two great chimneys were beacons toward the sea, and warders looking inland. As with the sea-winds, and the briny odors, and the tides that went and came, the house was a memory-haunted place, where walked the ghosts of the buried generations, whose ashes were in the "field of graves" just beyond. Eyes from its windows had watched the masons of Phips, rearing their mural defenses; and had seen the ships of D'Iberville, while with trembling hearts their owners listened to the bellowing of his cannon. Within, its thick walls, filled with such substances as made it impenetrable when bullets were bandied and Indian war-yells made the place dismal, the huddling settlers had more than once been gathered, as to a convenient shelter from the storm of battle. Its recent traditions had been more pacific, social, and friendly. It had been in the possession of a family celebrated for their widespread doors and tables, and their excellent openhandedness.

"In that mansion used to be
Free-hearted hospitality;
The great fires up the chimney roar'd,
The stranger feasted at the board."

The good master of the house went abroad and hailed them in, until in truth the feeder and the lodger were seldom wanting.

But on a winter evening, if the sleet bit, or the cold white spume leaped white over the sounding rocks, or if the "cold round moon shone deeply down," and the frosty fields sparkled, it was cozily warm and bright within the minister's study; where the glow out of that huge cavern of brick, in which the oak butts were burning, laughed upward over the backs of cherished tomes and the pictures upon the walls. In the presence of this jocund Lar and his genial attendants, the casual dropper-in forgot himself, and was not in haste to go. And this evening the program of silence and solitude must be laid aside, for the minister has agreed to entertain his friends, whom he has invited to a literary symposium. In an appropriate nook near his desk, and at the right hand from the hearth, in a high-backed chair covered with cretonne, reposed the slender

figure of the host. His face, long, smooth-shaven and pale had, for its distinguishing features, a well-rounded brow and dark glancing eyes. Fifty years had not dimmed their luster, and they instantly expressed each phase of his changing mood. Beside him, where the firelight fell full upon his face, sat the high-school teacher; a stirring, energetic man, of keen intelligence, who combined, during the winter months, the duties of a pedagogue with those of an editor, both of which, by the aid of a competent assistant, he satisfactorily discharged. To a stocky, well-compacted body was annexed a squarely-molded head; and in his whole person were indicated resolution and aggression. His opinions were pronounced decisively. He easily assumed the critical attitude, and the salt of his wit was at times slightly corrosive. At the left of the fireplace sat the village doctor. He, too, was a man slenderly proportioned, and with a darkly-bearded face, which was capable of much gravity at times. A genial spirit, however, was masked under a veil of caution and reticence; while at times, and with his friends especially, his eyes and his whole face grew radiant with

humor, and round them were "the busy wrinkles." The three united in their love of chat and in their love of literature.

"What a charm there is in an open wood-fire!" said the teacher. "I am half inclined to believe, with Shelley, that we are scarcely aware of its beauty. But one may acquire a hint of it, upon coming in from a walk upon a frosty night such as this."

"What charm abides," responded the min-inster, "in all the simple, elemental things of the world, and of human life, to all whose natures are sincere! I am more and more induced to rely upon them as the divinely-appointed instruments of our temporal well-being. Let us cultivate a closer acquaintance with, and a keener appreciation of, the elemental powers by which we are environed, and by which we live, for they exist within us. Let us understand our proper relations to the universe, and let us preserve them inviolate. It is an old story how corrupt and distraught human souls become by luxury, by haste and tumult, by violence and greed, and by the whirlpool-like complexity of things. I love and court the primitive life, with its serene

joys and its long relish. We are getting to be a people too suddenly jaded and outworn. It is as true now as ever, amid the multiplicity of things, that few are needful, while the task of selection is becoming burdensome. Thank God, this world has not for me yet lost its harmony or beauty! It may be true that youth rayed a peculiar splendor on me and on the world; yet, with all the years of dimness and tarnish, it has never been robbed of its own proper glory:

> "'The innocent brightness of a new-born day
> Is lovely yet.'

The older I grow, the more sacredly beautiful this universal frame becomes to my eyes. Is it not, after all, a part of God's great house,—an ante-chamber to his rooms of state; which his hands have adorned with shapes and hues no painter or jeweler can equal? Why ask for stone walls, as if here we sought our city of continuance? Why sigh for Plato's lettered ease, the elegant appointments of Seneca, or the Epicurean villa of Lucullus? Why should these artifices be thought necessary to our well-being; when, coming out of our mod-

est dwelling on a spring morning, we stand in the midst of the King's palace—a mansion indeed! a glorious structure! with its meadowy floors and flowered carpets, its green-foliaged pillars, its blue ceiling; an edifice like that above, unbuilt by human hands, on which no mason has clinked his trowel or carpenter struck his chisel? The beggar in his rags, who sinks to sleep under a haystack, amid the golden haze of a September evening, has over him an azure arch more deeply starred and sprinkled with celestial dew than ever bent over Nero in his Roman palace. He gazes upward, and his rustic eyes encounter

"'The splendid mooned and jeweled night,
The loveliest-born of God;'—

whereupon he may forget that he is one of earth's homeless outcasts. What shall bring joy to us, if there be none in the work of His hands, in the light of his smile, and in the breathing of his life? For he is more than the Architect,—the Fashioner of these wheels, terrestrial and celestial; he is also the Spirit who moves within them,—

"'And where he vital breathes there must be joy.'

You remember what he said, who was the most tirelessly hopeful and energetic soul of song in our century:

> "'God tastes an infinite joy
> In infinite ways—one everlasting bliss,
> From whom all being emanates, all power
> Proceeds; in whom is life for evermore,
> Yet whom existence in its lowest form
> Includes.'

But," he said shortly, checking himself, "I must not forget myself, and anticipate the delivery of my sermon."

"I can not believe," said the teacher, "that God designed our unhappiness; for in him and in his works there is doubtless a boundless store of enjoyment; but men will persist in the manufacture of misery. 'If you want troub', you must have troub',' as the irate countryman said, when he squared up to his tormentor, with blazing face and with doubled fists. It seems to me that he has yet only religion's smaller half, who can not exult in all this glory and beauty by which we are surrounded, and for it thank God daily. I think God will lay it to his charge who will not, and therefore can not, inherit this universal portion; who never comes to the Mountain of Joyful Appreciation,

but always to the Mountain of Hate and Terror; who never at some Gilgal partition of lots puts in his well-established claim to arduous delight and glorious difficulty; but who, in all this domain once the location of a Paradise, beholds only a farm—a market—a manufactory—a drill-ground; and who would, perhaps, if he had his way, 'change,' if we may use Ruskin's phrase, 'himself and his race into vegetables.'"

"Let us hold in restraint the language of scorn," said the minister, "nor overindulge any sense we may have of our own superiority. The elements of contentment and of the simpler unencumbered life are sown in every breast; but unhappily the good seed is choked. Let us lament this, and labor to correct it. And let us, above all things, cast out the malignant spirits, 'the spites and the follies;' for from them the harvest of human unhappiness is great upon the earth. Who would sneer at his kind, or hate his fellow-men? I had sooner sow cockle or darnel than hatred and scorn. I would not, as Tennyson avers, shut myself from my kind. Who of us would share the unblest solitude of a Vathek, or dwell agonizingly, with Arouet, in a false society? Surely,

not I! Poor Voltaire! so keen-sighted toward the earth; so purblind toward heaven! But I am talking rather stiffly and austerely. We are here to unbend, and to exhibit some of our lighter wares. Doctor, you have been silent. We await the content of that paper you hold, be it song or story."

"I have heard the theory advanced and expounded," began the doctor, "that the reign of the poet is ended, and that the reign of the realist and the scientist has begun. Let this be so, if it is so, or can be; but I am a steadfast believer that poetry, like gold and fire, lies at the root of the universe; and that, as the German lyrist has it, when the last man marches out of the world the last poet will go with him. This faith I have endeavored to express in some simple rhymes:

THE END OF SONG.

Of Song's divine succession sweet,
  Say, can there ever be an end?—
Apollo's golden reign complete—
  The Muses' latest sonnet penned?

Nay! not while rosy morning breaks,
  Or evening bathes her wings in dew;
Not while from slumber Love awakes,
  And Heaven again makes all things new.

Not till the spring no more returns,
And hushed is Robin's cheery note,
And no man more of summer learns
From Bob-o'-Lincoln's madcap throat.

Not while the bluebird's carol still
From winter thrills our greening vale;
Not while we know our whip-poor-will,—
England, her lark and nightingale.

Because our Shakespeare lies in dust,
Because our Milton sings no more,
Fails Song's supreme, immortal trust?
Is her harmonious mission o'er?

By all the passion of our heart,
By all our yearnings, all our dreams,
Suns may decline, and suns depart,—
Still on, the sacred luster streams.

Still music lives for waking ears,
Still beauty glows for opening eyes:
The bard, the minstrel, disappears,—
The race of poets never dies.

"We can but regret," said the teacher, "that the poet is ordinarily so poorly rewarded, and that he is so reluctantly applauded, and still more reluctantly paid. Poetry has fared but ill in the market-place, from the time of Spenser down. Think of the beggarly life of Gold-

smith, and the squalor and gloom of his surroundings! He is obliged to say of Poesy,—'loveliest maid,'—

"'My shame in crowds, my solitary pride,
Thou source of all my bliss and all my woe,
That found'st me poor at first and keep'st me so.'

Think of that scrimping measure to Spenser's prodigal genius! I declare, I hope it was no misrepresentation of Elizabeth's spirit that Landor gives us, when he makes the queen say to that parsimonious Cecil: 'I would not from the fountain of honor give luster to the dull and ignorant, deadening and leaving in its tomb the lamp of literature and genius. I ardently wish my reign to be remembered: if my actions were different from what they are, I should as ardently wish it to be forgotten. Those are the worst of suicides, who voluntarily and propensely stab or suffocate their fame, when God hath commanded them to stand on high for an example. . . . Edmund is grave and gentle: he complains of fortune, not of Elizabeth; of courts, not of Cecil. I am resolved, —so help me, God!—he shall have no further cause for repining. Go, convey unto him those twelve silver spoons, with the apostles on them,

gloriously gilded; and deliver into his hands these twelve large golden pieces, sufficing for the yearly maintenance of another horse and groom.' How about all this? 'Fine words,' we are told, 'butter no parsnips.' I suspect that Burleigh withheld this bounty, to let Spenser starve, if he must. I would like to recite to his injurious shade a quaint old legend of Allan Ramsay, which I must perforce offer you in my own poor phrase:

"The Eagle once gave to all his feathered subjects a great reception and banquet. Immediately upon the issuance of his order they came flocking 'to his high palace of the rock,' his courtiers and his loyal people; the Tersels, the Corbies, the Gleds, the Pyes, the Daws, the Peacocks, and hundreds more out of the most illustrious families; and all, without question, having made their obeisance to their master, took their places at his board, and fell to together gorging themselves and making witty speeches, amid uproarious laughter. While they sat feasting upon fawn, and drinking the warm blood of lambs, a tuneful little Robin came fluttering near them, and, resting himself on the bough of a bour-tree, began singing most sweetly.

"He sang the royal line of the Eagle; his kingly right, his valiant spirit, his voice of terror, and the piercing luster of his eye; his age renewed, his sublime flight into the heavens, his martial prowess; but loudest of all he celebrated his Monarch's noble mind, his heart of clemency, his guardianship of the dread Jovian thunderbolts, and, sweetest of all, his ardency and tenderness of love. The royal entertainer listened in delight to this lay of the little sylvan poet who, not venturing to sit at the table, had entertained the revelers with his music; whereupon, calling the Buzzard, his favorite chamberlain, he commissioned him to carry to the minstrel as much of the current coin of the realm as would suffice for a twelve months' support. 'We can well spare it,' said the Eagle, 'and it is clearly his due.'

"Forth, with deceit in his heart, and a lie in his beak, went the Buzzard; and, having reached the Robin's perch, he said: 'Begone from this place. Your voice is so harsh and tuneless you have deafened His Majesty, and put him out of all patience. His Majesty has an exquisite ear, and can no longer endure you. I counsel you, as a friend, to depart from this place, and to return hither no more.' So

into his own pouch the Buzzard put the gift of the grateful king, and sullenly departed.

"Then suddenly Robin's bosom began to swell, and the tears trickled out of his eyes. Low drooped his wings, and he moved not, but was silent. But most it grieved him, not that he had lost the tinsel of reward, but that his song was scorned, and that his person had been affronted. Still he sat till the guests had departed; when, spreading his wings for the wood where he had built his nest, he resolved to sing for kings and courts no more."

"And should you choose to be the Buzzard or the Robin?" the minister asked him. "No more than another can the poet have everything; and he has much in his endowment, and the power and the joy which it gives him. Should he meet with rebuffs, he should be best qualified to endure them; the grace of magnanimity should be his, for he has in himself a royal heritage. Your legend from Ramsay recalls to mind another quite to my purpose, which I will also endeavor in unrhymed terms to render. I think you may find it in the pages of Schiller:

"Once upon a time Jove put the Earth into Mankind's possession, and bade them to share

it wisely and like brothers. True to his instinct, and often as false to his reason, each one appropriated what he most desired, and that with little delay. The Usurer scrambled after his gold; the Farmer secured his field; the Merchant laid hold on his merchandise; the King seized on crown and throne and all his coveted lands. At the last came the Poet; but he was too late: nothing remained to him but the sky, and he was esteemed as a pauper in the world. Ascending to the palace hall of Jove, and prostrating himself at the foot of his throne, the disappointed Poet exclaimed: 'O Great Master! is there no portion for *me?*' 'Laggard!' replied the Sovereign of the Stars, when he looked upon him, 'where were you when the world was apportioned, that you did not consider your interests?' *'I was close beside you,'* said the Poet, 'your most devoted one; I was close beside you, Great Master, enraptured with the beauty of your presence and the glory of your house.' 'Then,' sighed the King of Heaven, 'I would not you should remain in poverty; but, alas! I have given the Earth away: nevertheless the door of my house stands open, and you are free to come and go and to abide whenever you will.' And so it

comes to pass that the Poet has been a sort of celestial vagrant ever since."

"Heaven bless him!" exclaimed the doctor. "He is welcome at my door!"

"Do you know," continued the minister, "whom I believe to have been the happiest man of his generation? It is John Wesley. And that is precisely because there was no man who so incessantly gave the wealth of his spirit to others; no man who cared so little for honors and effects for himself alone, being ashamed to die with too much of any good still in his exclusive possession. The fire of poetry gave its warmth to his blood, that seemed to flow so calmly,—but, more triumphantly, the spirit of piety. I hear him singing:

"'No foot of land do I possess,
No cottage in this wilderness:
A poor wayfaring man,
I lodge awhile in tents below;
Or gladly wander to and fro,
Till I my Canaan gain.

Nothing on earth I call my own;
A stranger, to the world unknown,
I all their goods despise;
I trample on their whole delight,
And seek a country out of sight,
A country in the skies.

There is my house and portion fair;
My treasure and my heart are there,
And my abiding home;
For me my elder brethren stay,
And angels beckon me away,
And Jesus bids me come.'

May we not believe that this illustrious wayfarer has long since seen 'the King in his beauty,' who in the days we share with him testified: 'The little birds have nests, and the foxes have their dens also, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head?' Indeed, the poet who is true to his high vocation has little need to be commiserated; and, to show this a little more clearly, I adduce this antique legend, plucked from some German wastebasket:

A RHYME OF THE MAGIC BOOK.

The student was faint and hungry,
He was gaunt, and lean, and pale;
He left his book and his garret nook
For a loaf and a flagon of ale.

His cloak was so faded and tattered,
He felt the sharp wind blow;
And where he trod, his feet, ill-shod,
Shrank from the frosty snow.

*In English, this transposition of subject and object is confusing. We don't know whether "the nests have the birds," or "the birds have the nests." Transpose the subject and object here, to express the exact meaning.

He counted his few poor pennies;
He sighed: "It is starve or freeze:
My fire may fail, yet to bread and ale
I must add a bit of cheese."

So, as he stood in the market,
And waited for his fare,
His eyes did scan the marketman,
Who a poet's book did tear.

The cheese in a golden leaflet
He wrapped right carelessly:—
"Pray, let me look at that old book,"
Said the student eagerly.

He seized and pored upon it:
"Now, what have you done!" he cries;
"You wrap with a poet's perfect page
Your paltry merchandise!

The tin and the dross you favor
At every rood may abound;
But the priceless thought, like your gold, may not
So easily be found."

"A fig for your song!" laughed the huckster;
"Your word it is most unwise;
You better might seize on my good cheese
Than that parcel of poet's lies."

"How say you so?" quoth the student;
"'T is a soothfast saw, well worn:
To the merry monarch his prizéd pearl;
To the peasant his barleycorn.

'T is true, I am cold and hungry,
And I have but pennies three;
But, if you please, take back your cheese,
And give the book to me."

"Ay, ay, as you please," scoffed the huckster;
"Go, starve on your poet's lay!"
With a joyous look, the student took,
And bore the book away.

Now a kindly heart had the shopman,
And his mind was ill at ease:
"Is it well," quoth he, "though a fool he be,
That the fellow should starve and freeze?"

He called his little son to him—
A gentle lad and rare:
"Now, hasten, Ben, to that student's den,
To see how he doth fare.

His head is full of his notions,
As a puppy's jacket with fleas:
Yet, here," he said, "take this loaf of bread,
Along with this bit of cheese."

Then through the streets of the city
The gentle youth did go,
Where from dark walls to the lamplight falls
A sparkling dust of snow.

He climbed to the student's garret;
The place looked mean and bare;
Then he stood before a battened door,
And looked through a knothole there.

The coals in the grate were dying;
One candle burned dim and low;
While a broken chair and a table bare
Were all the room could show.

But the boy, as he stood gazing,
Did feel a sudden stound;
His brain did reel, and like a wheel
His head seemed turning round.

He heard strange whirring voices,
Strange lights flashed in his eyes;
Then, in a swound all sense was drowned:—
At last he did arise.

'T was the open door of a palace
That then he deemed he saw;
And a scene within where the cherubin
Might bend in holy awe.

There sat the poor, pale student,
Enthroned in that splendid place;
While a mystic light from the book shone bright,
And lit up his pallid face.

With a lovely starlike luster
His eyes entrancéd shone;
With seerlike sight into Art's Delight,
He dwells no more alone.

The poets in long procession,
Moved round his dais high;
While music's pages, of all the ages,
Made their soft melody.

"Sure, I am only dreaming,"
Said the boy, and withdrew his eyes;
Then he rubbed them amain, and he looked again,
In wondering surmise.

Yes, there was the royal palace,
And the kingly man on his throne;
And the bards were found still moving round,
And singing with dulcet tone.

And ever, as they kept singing,
And sweeping their harps with grace,
Their magical skill made brighter still,
And ampler, seem the place.

Then came a beauteous maiden,
In her hand a wreathen crown;
On the student's brow she lays it now,
And by his side sits down.

In her hand a wand, star-pointed,
She held, and lifted high;
On her hair was set a coronet,
With the legend—Poesy.

Then changed was the face of the student,
And a nobler mien he bore
Than ever on earth, since the day of his birth,
The boy had seen before.

The book, once stained and tattered,
Now glowed like a sunset sea,
As it lay there, as a missal rare,
Open upon his knee.

. . . . . .

Home went the lad to his father,
And unto him he said:
"Poor and unknown he lives alone,
And his dwelling is a shed.

But, father, let me go with him,
For the student hath found a prize;
And, father, he can use a talisman,
And he sees with a poet's eyes;—

And he than a monarch is richer—
His cup flows full to the brim;
And the wealthy and great, in their splendor and state,
Have reason to envy him!"

"I would," pursued the minister, "emphasize the doctrine of the Utility of Art. It has been currently reported that song will *not bring bread;* and has not this hard maxim been strained into us, my brethren, with icy argument, and many painful examples of perishing poets in their attics, and starved, forlorn, melancholy minstrels? Who would have been a Homer, to hold his hat for an obolus? What

a doom was that of Chatterton! How significantly sorrowful the close of the career of Burns! But has it never been heard by any that *song is bread?* and that, though men will spend their money for that which is not such,—give their gold for some like hard, heavy substance,—heart and spirit have a food and currency of their own? What is the true singer but the quickener? Turn the pages of that Southern minstrel* who, amid disease, poverty, and neglect, was able to nourish and build up his own spirit—and none can do that without leaving a legacy, and bringing a benediction to the world—turn his precious pages, I say, till you come to *Corn,* and then turn on until you come to *The Bee;* and then pause there, like the bee's self, atilt on a flower, to hear what the singer has to say:—

> "Wilt ask, *What profit e'er a poet brings?*
> He beareth starry stuff about his wings
> To pollen thee and sting thee fertile.
> . . . . . .
> 'Hast ne'er a honey-drop of love for me,
> In thy huge nectary?'"

Blame, praise,—do what you will, in reason, but *pity* not the poet, as such; the *man* may

* Sidney Lanier.

need your pity, and crave it; but the *poet?*—never! A desert is not destitute to him!

"'The dark hath many dear avails;
The dark distills divinest dews;
The dark is rich with nightingales,
With dreams, and with the heavenly Muse.'"

"True it is," said the doctor, "the poet is forever hearing something more than meets the outward ear, and seeing something diviner than the natural eye ever discerns. Like Keats, his eye being filmed with the ointment of beauty, he can see a dryad in every green tree. He can never see a forest glade, or the white sand of the shore, without imagining a procession of beautiful forms; stately as those that Milton saw, or of Shakespearean grace and loveliness. Did you ever stand at the entrance of some woody glen, and listen to the laughing fall of musical water,—how like it is to the voice of a child? The Celtic legend of Kilmeny, the beautiful maiden who was wiled away into the faerie world of thought and dream, is repeated among the primitive people on our shores. The Indians in the mountain region of New Hampshire tell us the story of a little child who, wandering into the forest,

was met by the fantastic denizens of the place, and changed into one of their own kind. I have tried to put the legend into metrical form, with the following result:

THE WATERS OF CARR.

O do you hear the merry waters falling,
In the mossy woods of Carr?
O do you hear the child's voice calling, calling,
Through its cloistral deeps afar?
'T is the Indian's babe, they say,
Fairy stolen, changed a fay:
And still I hear her calling, calling, calling,
In the mossy woods of Carr!

O hear you, when the weary world is sleeping,
(Dim and drowsy every star),
This little one her happy revels keeping,
In her halls of shining spar?
Clearer swells her voice of glee,
While the liquid echoes flee,
And the full moon through deep green leaves comes peeping,
In the dim-lit woods of Carr.

Know ye from her wigwam how they drew her,
Wanton, willing, far away,—
Made the wild-wood halls seem home unto her,
Changed her to a laughing fay?
Never does her bosom burn,
Never asks she to return;—
Ah, vainly care and sorrow may pursue her,
Laughing, singing, all the day!

And often, when the golden west is burning,
  Ere the twilight's earliest star,
Comes her mother, led by mortal yearning
  Where the haunted forests are;—
    Listens to the rapture wild
    Of her vanished fairy child:
Ah, see her then, with smiles and tears, returning,
  From the sunset woods of Carr!

They feed her with the amber dew and honey,
  They bathe her in the crystal spring,
They set her down in open spaces sunny,
  And weave her an enchanted ring;
    They will not let her beauty die,
    Her innocence and purity;
They sweeten her fair brow with kisses many,
  And ever round her dance and sing.

O do you hear the merry waters falling,
  In the mossy woods of Carr?
O do you hear the child's voice calling, calling,
  Through its cloistral deeps afar?
    Never thrill of plaintive pain
    Mingles with that ceaseless strain;—
But still I hear her joyous calling, calling,
  In the morning woods of Carr!

"It is fortunate for us," said the teacher, "when our fantasies are so full of light and grace and happy music. Some that I wot of are full of Hadean gloom or of sepulchral ghastliness. When I think of the dismal superstitions that once dominated the human

spirit, I feel glad to remember that we live in an age when we are relieved of some of them; even though we may have been delivered into the hands of that other demon of doubt. Here is a legend of the days of spiritual terror, which I found in the pages of Heine; and which, while he gives it to us in his perfect prose, I have perhaps spoiled by my clumsy versifying:

THE NIGHTINGALE OF BASLE.

MAY, 1433.

In august council sternly set,
The reverend fathers once were met,
  At Basle's ancient town:
Prelates were there of high degree,
And many a learned society,
  That wore the cope and gown.

Then, in some session's interval,
In converse, abbot, cardinal,
  Together strolled along
A sheltered path, where from the trees
Came the wind's softest melodies,
  And many a wild bird's song.

But to their ears seemed nature mute;—
Engaged in many a fierce dispute,
  They heard her music not:

Long-moldy dogmas they restated;
And these, most furiously debated,
Filled all their round of thought.

Whether Aquinas greater were
Than Doctor Bonaventura;—
If pause in heaven might be:
Shrill were their tones, their looks were glum;
Vexed, as of old, with tweedledum,
And puzzling tweedledee.

But, on an instant, rapturously
Forth from a blooming linden-tree,
Such throbbing notes did start,
As fill at eve some moonlit vale,
When pours the passioned nightingale
The fullness of her heart.

Surprised by that delicious flood,
Transfixed before the tree they stood,
And listened in delight;
Such golden melodies were trolled,
A little space their dogmas old
Evanished from their sight.

The scents and sounds of spring again
Did penetrate the misty brain
Of each tanned theologue:
Till one cried: "Cease! Enough we 've heard!
The devil may be in a bird,
As well as in a dog!"

Before them yawned Hell's dark abysm!
With many a muttered exorcism,
Himself each brother crossed:
"From pious themes, from counsels pure,
He draws us with voluptuous lure:
Hasten! or all is lost!"

With that, the tree seemed all aflame,
And sounds of mocking laughter came
Out of the linden gay:
"Yes, I 'm a fiend," a sweet voice said;
"So you do well to be afraid!"
Then flew the bird away.

But, in that very eventide,
The legend saith, each brother died,
Whose ears that song assailed;
Not the exorcist's muttered spell,
Not all the pattering beads they tell,
Nor e'en the cross, availed.

But, if the truth might be believed,—
(For slowness of our faith hath grieved
The bravest souls that be),
No evil in the bird o'erthrew
Those pious monks of old, nor slew
Those doctors of degree.

Dark souls, alas! and prostrate age,
That superstition's bitterest rage
Could ever so assail!
They slandered nature's loveliness,
Darkened the linden's flowery dress,
Proscribed the nightingale!

Ah! happier souls! with fearless eyes
Who find delight in seas and skies,
  Who earth's green realms explore!
No more such haunting shadow falls
Down the sun-rifted woodland halls,
  Or the sea-beaten shore.

But true it ever is, in day
Like that of Basle, far away,
  Or time, like ours, more near;
One step there is—surer than fate—
The step from theologic hate
  To superstitious fear.

"I have been thinking of your priest," said the doctor, "and of his remark concerning the dog. I wonder if the canine breed is more susceptible to demoniacal than to divine possession. I have indeed seen dogs that were vile enough, wild, mad, hideous, hateful dogs, that might well have had a devil in them; and, again, I have seen them with a sweetness of temper and a constancy of devotion almost superhuman. These are the nobility of dogs. If dogs have not souls, these at least deserve them, for they live as if they had them. On a recent evening, when I read my Bible, and came upon these words, *'Without are dogs,'* I could not forbear this comment: 'Good Carlo—shaggy Cæsar. from Newfoundland—honest

Luath—Owd Roa—Flush, my dog—thou dog of St. Bernard—and each other decent member of the canine brotherhood,—surely this sentence of celestial banishment has no reference to you. It is the currish, unclean, ignoble tribe that shall be excluded. And, as for the warning, "Beware of dogs!" neither can that be fairly applied to you. O Rab! O Maida! and thou for whom Sheelah pleaded in dying! fear nothing: it may go ill with some of your masters; but surely it shall be well with you. You were not excluded from this green earth of God's, and from his blue sky: so bark gleefully, and take courage.'

"A talkative woman, who carried with her a dismal face—and a poodle, called on a good minister in his last illness—a minister who was notorious for his wit and his clear sense. The woman chattered tediously; but to the poodle, who looked silently and sympathetically upon him, the old man in a weak voice addressed most of his conversation. When the woman arose to go, he shook the doggie's paw, and said, with a little sigh: 'Well, good-bye, Fido. Be a good dog, and you 'll go where the good dogs go.'

"'Where is your dog?'

"The question was answered hopefully, and by a clergyman:

"'In heaven, if he has been a good dog.'

"I have no objection.

"So, when I read in that final summing up of the Apocalypse, *'Without are dogs,'* I am inclined to put a liberal interpretation upon its reference to the antipodes of the faithful."

"I do not know," observed the minister, "that the dog is anywhere in Scripture associated with the mystic, the spiritual, or the supernatural, as are the lamb and the dove. We must come to the Gael or the Scandinavian for that association; and I suppose it to be wholly owing to the inferior Oriental breed. But the dog figures mainly in the realm of superstition; and here I recall the Celtic legend of the Banshee,—the female fairy who, in Irish peasant homes, is supposed, by her wailing, or singing, under the windows at night to foretell the death of one of the family. With this midnight cry the howling of the house dog was associated. So, Allingham:

"'I heard the dogs howl in the moonlight night,
And I went to the window to see the sight;
All the dead that ever I knew
Going one by one and two by two.'

A similar legend is, in our own country, associated with the cry of the whip-poor-will. One evening, in the early autumn of 18—, I had left the Nobleboro Camp-meeting Ground for a quiet walk along a lonely road that led through a pine wood. As I moved along, with that pleasing feeling of awe and alluring dread which unfamiliar, shadowy places will inspire, in the deep woods not far away from me I heard a whip-poor-will, whose intermittent lament awakened in me the most indefinable sensation that a bird has ever inspired. And when I awoke at midnight, to hear through my open window the same sound, I aver it tested some latent capacity that is in me for superstitious feeling.

"If you will bear with me, I will give you some account of the matter in the following rhapsody:

"THE WHIP-POOR-WILL.

Mine is the solitary road.
Glooms of evening deepen all around me;
Distant gleam the lights of the encampment;
The rain-portending zephyr caresses me,
Blown out of the shadowy East:
A long dimming tract; a path fading at eventide;

A poet's book—the singer of wonderful child-
songs,
Smiling out upon me from the Vale of Har:
A dream-world all around me;—
The assembled ghostly companions,
And guests of Memory. . . .
. . . The voice of the whip-poor-will!

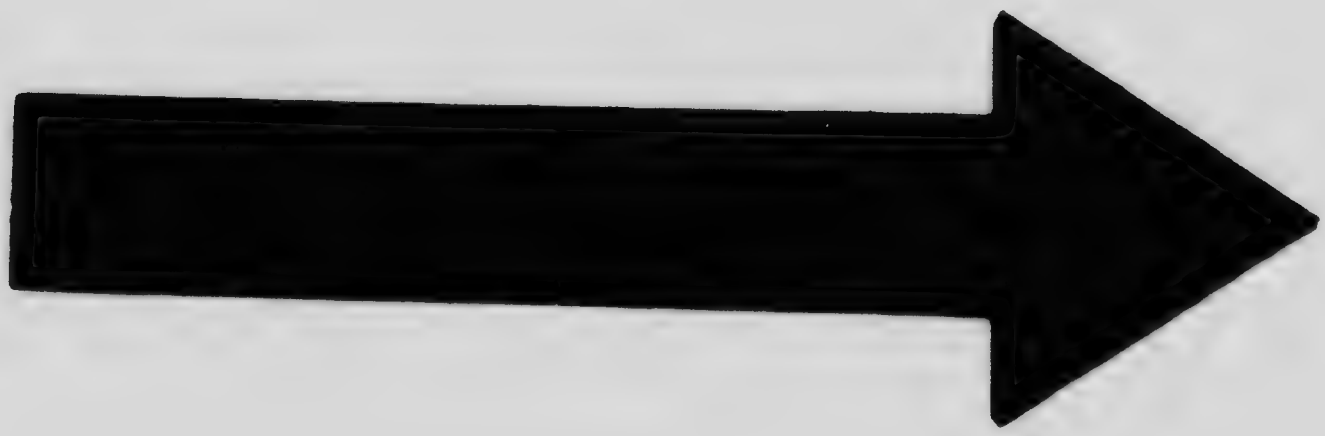
A path that turns aside into the pine woods—
A sanctuary of the night-breathing wind;—
An infinite, satisfied sigh—
The entering of a soul into eternity's repose.
Then comes a susurrus—a longer surge—
A sound of far-off seas—
A billowy echo—voices of haunted shores . . .
Hark! What sound rises out of the wildwood?
It is the wail of my heart,—
A mingled utterance of longing and regret . . .
. . . The song of the whip-poor-will!

Up through the brown floor of the pine woods
Have arisen the spirits of the place—
The pale-green, delicate ferns,
The sisterhood of this forest nunnery.
They tremble and wave,
Like sentient, living creatures,
And nod, conversing with one another.
I can almost hear their elfin voices;
Their faces are pale in the dim arbor
Where they are clustering;—
They stand, like the choristers of a temple
When the anthem is about to begin;
They fill me with awesome delight.

Then, out of the thicket's deep comes forth a tender lamentation,
A weeping note, repeated and repeated . . .
. . . The song of the whip-poor-will!
. . . . . .
And I hear it, again and again,
As I wander back to the encampment . . .
Then again, at midnight,
I start out of my sleep, as if some one near me had spoken,—
Forsaking my dream;—
When through the open window comes the self-same sound,—
The plaintive call, the threshing *wheep-to-wheep!* . . .
. . . The voice of the whip-poor-will!

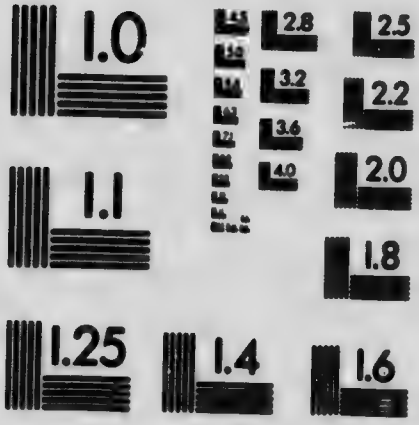
What meanest thou, O bird?—
O bird, or haunting Spirit,
Pursuing my wandering feet,
Breaking my lonely slumber,
Here in the wilderness!
Grievest thou for the grief that must rend my bosom;
For the beloved and the beautiful that are reft away?
Ah! no, sweet bird!
It is for the solace of thy love thou singest:
I will not accuse thee, and call thee a prophet of ill.
Still will I listen at evening to the sound that has been my delight—
The voice of the whip-poor-will.

"Ay, that is a true account of the whip-poor-will," said the doctor. "One summer evening I had made a call on a sick girl at a farm-house near a tract of woods. I was just leaving, and the farmer followed me out into the yard; when, on one of the outlying apple-trees of his orchard, a whip-poor-will from the near-by thicket set up its threshing note. The farmer looked ruefully in the bird's direction, shook his head, and said, in a tone half petulant, half disconsolate: 'There, I wish that thing would keep away! I have always heard it before the death of my friends. I fear now that M—— will not get up again.' I said, 'Did you ever lose any in the winter?' He answered affirmatively. 'Then,' I asked, 'did you hear the whip-poor-will?' He laughed, and said, 'I guess not.' The fact was, his daughter recovered, and is yet living. But, since you have given us this touch of mysticism and superstition, let me, by way of an alterative, bring forward a more cheerful legend. More than twenty years since, I was walking with a quaint old minister through a bit of sweet pasture land, in the edge of a June evening, when suddenly a sturdy robin set up his evensong. 'What is that fellow saying?'



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)





APPLIED IMAGE Inc

1653 East Main Street
Rochester, New York 14609 USA
(716) 482 - 0300 - Phone
(716) 288 - 5989 - Fax

asked my companion. I listened intently and reflectively for a moment or two, and then said: 'I can not tell you. Anything you wish to hear, I suppose.' 'Well, I will tell you: He says—But what he said, I think I will venture to put in rhyme:

DOCTOR ROBIN.

Forth, one evening, bent on ranging,
When winter into spring was changing,
I went—with blues still deeper bluing,
And all the ghosts of night pursuing:
Through April clouds the sun was breaking,—
But O, my head—my head was aching,—
My feet were cold, my ears were ringing,—
When Doctor Robin set up singing:
"O, cheer-er up, chee-er!
See here! See here!
What is the matter—what is the matter,
That you are so glum, and not any fatter?
What is it! What is it!
Is it phthisic? Is it phthisic?
Keel 'im, cure 'im, geeve 'im phy-sicke!"

"Doctor!" I cried, "In an abysm
I 'm plunged—of gout and rheumatism!
I 've meningitis and paresis,
And half a score of dread diseases;
Dyspepsia, and consumption, too,
My hesitating steps pursue;

Low fever to my blood is clinging:—"
But Doctor Robin kept on singing:
"O cheer-up, cheer-er," etc.

"No, sir! however you may watch me,
So napping you shall never catch me!
Throw physic to the dogs and fishes,"
I said, with many *pshaws* and *pishes:*
"Besides (himself each mortal pleases),
I have, and like, my pet diseases:
Worse am I, alway, by my notion,
With every pesky pill or potion
The doctor or the nurse are bringing:"—
But Doctor Robin would be singing:
"O cheer-up, cheer-er," etc.

"Well," said I, yielding, "cease your jibing,
And presently begin prescribing."
"I will," said Doctor Bob, benignly:
"Abstain from 'swats that drink divinely;'
Take three bread-pills, upon retiring;
Use one old saw, until perspiring;
Your sulky spleen remember never,
And do not overload your liver:
When in the morning round you potter,
Drink one good quart of clear cold water;
Take exercise, up to the letter;
Then, in a fortnight you 'll be better.
Good-night, sad sir, I must be winging,—
But first, I 'll take my pay—in singing:
So cheer-er up, chee-er!
See here! See here!

What is the matter—what is the matter,
That you are so glum, and not any fatter?
What is it! What is it!
Is it phthisic? Is it phthisic?
Keel 'im, cure 'im, geeve 'im phy-sicke!'"

"In matters of hygiene and the *materia medica,*" said the teacher, "there appear to be two classes of infatuated errorists, both bent on an extreme; those who think they need the doctor all the time, and those who think they never need him; and those who, when they do call him, neglect his prescription,—like that witty fellow who said to his physician that, had he followed his prescription, he must have broken his neck, since he threw it out of an upstairs window. There is a foolish, as well as a wise, bent of the will; and some persons seem never so determined as when they are in the wrong. They thought so once, and that is enough: you come back three ages afterwards, and find them saying the same."

"I use food when I hunger; and when I need it I use medicine," said the minister. "In the one case I employ the farmer, and in the other the doctor; but in both cases I most intimately rely on my Infinite Physician and Nourisher, who gives life and maintains its processes. I

do not thereby neglect or discredit him, for he puts bread into my hands through the course of nature and of human industry; and it is he who has put their healing and curative properties into plants and minerals. But let me read to you an almost sacramental passage from the pages of Pastor Wagner, upon the growth of wheat: 'By the bread that Christ broke one evening in sign of redeeming sacrifice and everlasting communion, we can say that wheat entered into its apotheosis. Nothing that concerns it is indifferent to us. . . . From the day that it comes out of the earth to the last rays of the October sun, throughout the long sleep of winter, the awakening of the spring, to the harvest in August, our attention follows the evolution of the tender green blade, destined to become the nourishment of men. In time it is a swelling sea of green, constellated with poppies and bluebottles. . . . In July the fields look like gold. And when the wind blows and rustles the stalks together, we seem to hear the grain running in the bushel measures. The bread sings in it in fine weather; but if the horizon darkens a shiver runs through the stalks, as in the heart of the peasant. . . . At last is the harvest, the

barn, the threshers. Then comes the grinding in the mill, and the kneading by bakers and housewives. The bread is on the table. Before eating it, think that it is the fruit of the labor of men and of the Son of God. Take it in gratitude and fraternal love. Do not suffer a crumb to be lost. Break it willingly with those who have none. As the wind blows, as the fountain gushes, as the morning brightens, so wheat grows for all.' But come, since the Sabbath approaches, let us, before parting, greet its coming with devotion. The Greek sage, who was master of the purest philosophy, put up his orison under the open sky and amid the green fields with his disciples; how much more our Master, when amid the hills and by the waters of Galilee? The morning of thy day rises upon us, O thou Heavenly One! Come thou with thy joyous symbol, which is for the enlightening of the Jewish and the Gentile lands. So art thou for all human hearts. We shall rejoice in his beams, and in thine. But if, perchance, he should be hidden from our eyes, or should cease before the closing of the day, let not thy light fail us, nor thou, our adored, our most hallowed, and beauteous One,

withdraw thyself, leaving us weary wayfarers on a benighted road.

> 'Leave us not to storm and terror,
> Leave us not to doubt and error,
> Light and healing of our hearts!'"

Then, taking a Bible from the desk, he continued: "Ah, how I love this Book! Many books are good to me; but this is like a daughter of the gods amid a bevy of common beauties. I love this Book with my heart, for it answers the cry of my heart; I love it with my intellect, for I am awed before it, and it commands the suffrage of mightiest minds; I love it with my will, for I, too, can say, in my measure of power, 'I delight to do thy will, O God!' I love it with my æsthetic perception, for it is like honey under my tongue, and nothing is like its wondrous expression. I say with Bacon, that no agency has done so much to exalt our race; with Milton, that 'there are no songs like the Psalms of David;' with Fuller, 'How fruitful are the seeming barren places of Scripture!' . . . Wheresoever the surface of God's Word doth not laugh and sing with corn, there the heart thereof within is

merry;' and with Hamilton, 'The pearl is of great price; but even the casket is of exquisite beauty. The sword is of ethereal temper, and nothing cuts so keen as its double edge; but there are jewels on the hilt, and exquisite inlaying on the scabbard. The shekels are of the purest ore; but even the scrip which contains them is of a texture more curious than the artists of earth could fashion it. The apples are gold; but even the basket is silver.' Yesterday I read some of the noblest passages written in our English tongue; but when I had done so, and had come at evening to the Book, the words my eyes dwelt upon seemed more divinely beautiful than all. I will read them, and then we will sing a hymn:

"Now these be the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said:

"The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.

"The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.

"And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain."

The minister closed the Book, and named the hymn, which the three united to sing:

"Bread of the world, in mercy broken,
Wine of the soul, in mercy shed,
By whom the words of life were spoken,
And in whose death our sins are dead;

Who wast made flesh our souls to cherish,
Who godlike tread'st Time's angry wave;
Who, lest the sons of men should perish,
Became omnipotent to save;

Whose sacred wounds aloud are crying,—
'These bleeding tokens, Father, see!'
Our living Lord, our hope in dying,
We cast our helpless souls on thee!

Look on the heart by sorrow broken,
Look on the tears by sorrow shed;
And be thy feast to us the token
That by thy grace our souls are fed." *

Having finished the singing, they went forth into the open air. The stars were vivid, while yet the full moon rode high in the naked heavens. A peculiar softness and balminess in the air, with a sense of the gracious sublimity of that great house of God, with its roof sparkling over them, constrained them to bare their brows for a moment; whereupon, taking the minister by the hand, with a good-night, his guests departed.

* The first stanza and the last are by Bishop Heber.

Winter on the Penobscot.

I.

"The white glory overawes me;
The crystal terror of the seer
Of Chebar's vision blinds me here."
—Whittier.

A SCATTERED flight of snowbirds. All day the feathery flakes have softly fallen, and before evening the fields and roads are beautifully muffled. The trees and fences are impearled. I think of one poet's spiritual interpretation:

"The troubled sky reveals
The grief it feels."

Silence settles with the night; the earth lies entranced. Afterward comes the rain.

Hark! it is the rising wind! It bespeaks the arrival of change—the entrance of a transforming spirit. What a Protean nature is this! The Arctic sculptor is in his studio; this builder is busy with "the frolic architecture"

of the frost. Could we see, we might note how the gray cloud has darkened. By and by the moon is a bright knot in a swirl of frosty vapors. The little moon-people will be dancing down the Sowadabscook, and will hold high revels on the glassy plain of the Penobscot to-night. Yet dreaming mortals little conceive what the daybreak shall disclose.

II.

"O winter! ruler of the inverted year

. . . . . .

I crown thee "King" of intimate delights,
Fireside enjoyments, homeborn happiness."
—Cowper, "The Task."

Madam Januarius alights from her coach with more than her usual bustle; with a breezy impertinence she unpacks her wardrobe and spreads her frosty sheets for the night. Cold is the comfort of that traveler she entertains. She is an immaculate termagant; and, turning from the window, I manage to seat myself far enough from her humors to enjoy, in philosophic composure and imaginative comfort, that milder clime—the fireside. Jessica draws the blind—a clean linen veil between light and darkness, storm and calm—that

magic hem separating the garments of fulgent Therma and flinty-hearted Zero, that most unfeeling crystal! I give the fire another poke between the bars, and then take down from its place on the shelf my volume of "Spare Hours," or my Lowell, or Burroughs, at a venture. To-night no guest will come; this is entertainment for an evening. Again I will get to thinking: Who makes Rab the jewel he is; and Marjorie that bright child-shadow undying?

III.

"Return, sweet evening, and continue long!
. . . . . .
Composure is thy gift."

—Cowper, "The Task."

I muse over this book of peculiar charm, and venerate an overfamiliar, much-honored name, borne by peoples so diverse. John Brown! At Harper's Ferry it meant war; on Calton Hill it signifies peace. Dear Rab, and dear Marjorie!—how will you resolve me the peculiar subtlety of their spell? The style seems felicity itself. There are no double rainbows, no sun-bursts to dazzle you, but this author sets you down at the feet of quieter

beauty, and makes you feel at home. Enumerate, if you please, the list of his generous elements, so deftly combined. Give us a sort of inventory. *Imprimis:* "A well of English undefiled;" a certainty of touch; strength and gentleness; clarity of sense, with poetic color; a turn for the practical, well united to his taste and his genial fancy; tenderness of heart, sympathy with all life—at depth with human life; a tendency to humanitarianism; a partiality for dogs,—like that of Scott, yet different; pervasive bookishness, with a genuine love of nature and a deep attachment to the "land of brown heath and shaggy wood," and a liberal acquaintance therewith. Well, is this all? And is not this a list sufficient to stock the man of your choice, withal? We will suppose others: A breathing sweet with poetic odors of all time, his thought exhaling the effluvia of richest minds, of old fragrant writings—the musk and lavender of anciency; a perception of best things; a delicate appropriateness in quotation, as if Milton or Shakespeare had just coined a brand-new text fit for his purpose; a passion for the child and the maiden, pure as dew; filial honor and devotion, as he shall say who reads the mono-

graph on his father—a pattern of all such things; an appreciation, a portraiture; a deep enjoyment of Scott and Thackeray; an unfailing freshness and wholesomeness, tonic and stimulant; a bracing morality—a morality never prudish or pharisaical. All these things we find, with a peculiar gratefulness in the finding. But the charm, always present and chiefly felt, is that of a delightful personality, which gives a flavor to his style, as distinctive as that of Lamb or Irving. His self-revelations are the opening of a veritable heart-Eden. *He* is in all he has written—a delicious sauce to every dish. His child-portraitures seem more real than those of Dickens, his child-sympathy as genuine. With the communication of his preferences, delights, joys, sorrows, humors, and convictions, you share his gentle enthusiasms, and delight as in the presence of the printed page, and something more—that of a choice companion. He touches a few themes selectly, and invests them with a sunny charm, tinged here and there with gentle melancholy. With no exhaustion from the expenditure, he puts the very juice, marrow, nerve, of his life into his rare sentences; you are conscious of rich reserve. Then he takes you into his confidence in so upright and manly

a way, giving you so few foibles of weakness and vanity, that you instinctively admire and respect this sturdy Scotch character as much as you love his writings. As for that bit of choice biography he has given us, I know nothing of the kind that pleases me so well. The life of a soul is there, and the spiritual features seem distinct as the physical. Such a piece of writing will hold with its fascination through repeated perusal. In its condensed dimensions it is a cameo; in its perfection of beauty, a gem. It is the best of reading for a winter fireside.

IV.

I have a freehold in the domain of the old Cavalier poets, and love to wander back beyond the loose times and wanton rhymes of the Second Charles, and his Sedleys, Butlers, and Rochesters, to a more stirring season, wherein the trumpet sounds, and King and Commons clash together; and, perhaps, after the battle to pause beneath that oak which became a Prince's shelter, wherein he lingered—

"Till all the paths were dim,
And far beneath the Roundhead rode,
And hummed a surly hymn."*

*Tennyson—The Talking Oak.

There I find a Tyrtæan warrior-music, rousing with strains like a charge of horsemen with leveled lances; a ringing cry and call of honor, breaking love's rosiest chain to embrace an embattled brother, affirming, if this were not done—

"I could not love thee, dear, so much;" *

and then a waving of the sword aloft, and the shout at the onset:—

*Our business is like men to fight,
And hero-like to die."†

There I find an expressed nobleness, a chivalry, never so antique as to be useless: there such matchless songs of love and compliment, as Lovelace sang to Althea from prison, and Suckling, of her whose

"Feet beneath her petticoat,
Like little mice, stole in and out,
As if they feared the light."

There is a sinuous, gliding, and dancing grace of verse, like a child, lithe of limb, and golden-locked, flinging itself jubilantly in the sun; there are brightest flashes of honest wit,

---

*Lovelace—Lucasta, on Going to the Wars.
†Motherwell—The Song of the Cavalier.

and glancings of most starry poesy, that have their charm even after the bracing thought, severe, the elevation of style, solemn harmony, and heroic magnificence of Milton. There Herbert, Quarles, and Vaughan sing their sage and quaint and religious songs, giving us some peeping insight "into that world of light," where to the full recognizance of all forms immortal the soul shall "need no glasse." There we shall get from the Roman Catholic Crashaw some rare, peculiar verse. But there was one who was the sport of fortune and disaster's child, but whose name suggests to me fields of tedded grass, with which all wild flowers and the dead-ripe strawberries mingle; a most homely-fragrant, sweet-briery memory—dear old George Wither, the man of an unwithering fame, among those with whom such fame is of any consequence. He comes down upon the poetry of his time like showers on the grass, so fresh, so vivacious, so feasting-full he is. Amid the changing fortunes of the time this singing Cavalier was alternately elevated or depressed; according to the prevalence of Puritan or Royalist he had lack or abundance, so that his was a very apostolic diversity of experience. As truest poets do,

he trod the winepress, and expressed rich juice of bruised hopes and affections. He was a lark at liberty, but a nightingale caged; for when his artist-soul wrought in the crucible of the prison into which his foes threw him, and where he dwelt for years, his golden arabesques of rhyme speak of dungeon stones as of gems, and of gloomy cells as if they had been palaces. The radiant, imperial mind conjured blank walls into blazoned pictures, and converted the creaking of unoiled hinges and closing of doors into joyous music. Shut in from the green fields, the ghosts of daisies came to dance before his eyes, and the dull floor sprang verdant before him. We must repeat some of his verses—rich, if not the richest offering ever in such a place made at the shrine of Poesy:—

"Though confined within these rocks,
Here I waste away the light,
And consume the sullen night,
She* doth for my comfort stay,
And keeps my many cares away.
Though I miss the flowery fields,
With those sweets the spring-tide yields,
Though I may not see those groves
Where the shepherds chant their loves,
And the lasses more excel
Than the sweet-voiced Philomel.

*The Muse.

Though of all those pleasures past,
Nothing now remains at last,
But remembrance, poor relief,
That more makes than mends my grief:
She 's my mind's companion still,
Maugre envy's evil will.
(Whence she would be driven, too,
Were 't in mortal's power to do.)
She doth tell me where to borrow
Comfort in the midst of sorrow:
Makes the desolatest place
To her presence be a grace;
And the blackest discontents
Be her fairest ornaments.
In my former days of bliss,
Her divine skill taught me this,
That from everything I saw
I could some invention draw,
And raise pleasure to her height
Through the meanest object's sight;
By the murmur of a spring,
By the least bough's rustlëing.
By a daisy, whose leaves spread,
Shut when Titan goes to bed;
Or a shady bush or tree,
She could more infuse in me,
Than all Nature's beauties can,
In some other wiser man.
By her help I also now
Make this churlish place allow
Some things that may sweeten gladness,
In the very gall of sadness.

The dull loneness, the black shade,
That these hanging vaults have made;
The strange music of the waves
Beating in these hollow caves;
This black den which rocks emboss
Overgrown with eldest moss;
The rude portals that give light
More to terror than delight:
This my chamber of neglect,
Walled about with disrespect.
From all these, and this dull air,
A fit object for despair,
She hath taught me by her might
To draw comfort and delight.
Therefore, thou best earthly bliss,
I will cherish thee for this.
Poesy, thou sweet'st content
That e'er Heaven to mortals lent:
Though they as a trifle leave thee,
Whose dull thoughts can not conceive thee,
Though thou be to them a scorn,
That to nought but earth are born,
Let my life no longer be
Than I am in love with thee!
Though our wise ones call it madness,
Let me never taste of gladness,
If I love not thy maddest fits
Above all their greatest wits,
And though some, too seeming holy,
Do account thy raptures folly,
Thou dost teach me to contemn
What makes knaves and fools of them."

I love a man who appreciates his Muse; and so did gentle Elia. I marvel not Charles Lamb found sweetness in the meat of Wither. Here we have something of Wordsworth's placidity, his mild philosophy, and all his simplicity.

Dear old Cavalier Poet! he did get release from prison, and fell into his last sleep at London on the 2d of May, 1667.

V.

FROST-WORK.

Past, the chill night, with wannest smile the morn
Looks forth, white-veiled. What charm from midnight drear
Hath now earth reft, and o'er chaste features worn?
The tardy sun his cloudy face doth clear:
Behold! what maze of fairydom is here!
There 's not an elm that springs his shaft aloof
But gives of winter's stateliest beauty proof!
The trees as branching corals all appear!
I stand with eye attent, and wistful ear,
Where Silence lays his finger, as I soon
Quaint bugles blown from Elfinland may hear.
But, lo! the magic scatters! the pure boon
Is quickly gone! Each tall tree 's powdery crown
Does 'mid th' applausive stillness tremble down.

VI.

"There was a roaring in the woods all night."

That type of mystery, whereof He spake who made it, came forth to smite the corners of the house. What was that? We are startled from our slumbers by a crackling sound, followed by a sudden rushing sound. It is not Pentecost, and there are no fiery tongues, and yet there is a voice! A thud and a tinkle, as if some crystalline thing had been suddenly shattered and dispersed. That rushing is of snow, dislodged from the roof, and of icicles and crystal splinters swept away. What cry is that—what groan! Does the ear give a true report? I feel it is the distress of a tree,—a burden that fell two evenings ago with the darkness. How can the trees endure the added fury of the wind? I seem to hear the agony of a dryad! Again, and again, the rush, the thud, the tinkling.

At dawn our valley is one living crystal; but the hills are not yet lamps of tinted splendor held up and lighted of the sun. Old High Head is a cape projecting into the world of Faerie. Our willows, stout and aged, show a

melancholy beauty, an uncomfortable magnificence. It was *their* report we heard through the night, and the complaining of the elms; their icy coats are rent, here and there, and the crusted snow is darkened around them by their shredded twigs and branches—

"By hoary winter's ravage torn."

The numerous brittle boughs are tense with frost; the icy burden can not be borne; all day they continue to lay their weighty honors down.

"Woe doth the heavier sit,
Where it perceives it is but faintly borne."

So do the prizes of this world—more in show than sense—become to us splendid infirmity. These burdened trees shall prosper yet the more: this may be a necessary lopping off. But surely, with his keen frost-scimitar, the invisible forester has been at work busily!

The resilient elms—that noble colonnade that makes a vista of shade toward the river—have their strength and pliancy taxed to the utmost, but they do not yet surrender. The furze-woods, with their contrasted decoration, have a patient, shrouded, shrunken, overburdened mien. They stand so forlornly, and with

such distinctness, against the pallor of earth and sky, like dispirited men herded together, with their hands thrust in their pockets! They are kings of the north crushed under a weight of pearls. One might be pleased with a gem here and there; but who would be covered with them, like Tarpeia with shields? How would the woods shine now, should the sun let loose its radiance!

Take now a stroll into the woods: there is a lane we know, that leads between two rough stone walls out toward an open pasture, and the rein is a grove of beeches. Let us go thither, and we shall see what the poet has pictured!

"Look! the massy trunks
Are cased in the pure crystal; each light spray,
Nodding and tinkling in the breath of heaven,
Is studded with its trembling water-drops,
That glimmer with an amethystine light.
But round the parent-stem the long low boughs
Bend, in a glittering ring, and arbors hide
The glassy floor. C, you might deem the spot
The spacious cavern of some virgin mine,
Deep in the womb of earth—where the gems grow,
And diamonds put forth radiant rods and bud
With amethyst and topaz—and the place
Lit up most royally with the pure beam
That dwells in them. Or haply the vast hall
Of fairy palace that outlasts the night

And fades not in the glory of the sun;—
Where crystal columns send forth slender shafts
And crossing arches; and fantastic aisles
Wind from the sight in brightness, and are lost
Among the crowded pillars. Raise thine eye;
Thou seest no cavern roof, no palace vault;
There the blue sky and the white drifting cloud
Look in. Again the wildered fancy dreams
Of spouting fountains, frozen as they rose,
And fixed, with all their branching jets, in air,
And all their sluices sealed. All, all is light;
Light without shade. But all shall pass away
With the next sun. From numberless vast trunks
Loosened, the crashing ice shall make a sound
Like the far roar of rivers, and the eve
Shall close o'er the brown woods as it was wont."

VII.

"When o'er Canadian plains
The frosts of winter yield,
And on the snowy firs
The green 's again revealed,—
When April, child of change,
Is here in wanton sway,
The snow-bird's twitter tells
That spring is on the way.

Afar from balmier skies,
Afar from flowerier groves,
Where other winged companions
Hide now their nests and loves,

They turn their dauntless flight
Towards our paler day,
With word of the arbutus
And message of the May.

When cheery voice and eye
And ash-gray wing appear,
Now many a heart that grieved
Is glad that they are here!
Ay, to how many a heart
The doors of joy they ope!
'T is God who sends them hither
Lest we forget to hope.

When storm-winds sweep
The bitter deep,
Bird of the snow,
May God thee keep."

—From the French of Fréchette.
Translated by Charles G. D. Roberts.

If we enter our winter woods we shall find them not altogether silent and tenantless; at least, the stillness of the quietest day may be broken by well-defined bird-tones, and the desolate places may be made glad by their flitting forms. In your walks you will be apt to meet the familiar snow-bunting, rarely wanting in his due season in the forest lands of Maine, or of Canada. These rollicking little holiday-makers love the flying flakes and the

heaped snowdrifts, as the petrel loves the crest of the climbing wave. Our Canadian poets have loved this little darling of the bleak wilderness; and rarely has poet described more accurately the habitude and environment, the atmosphere and motion of a bird, than Lampman has described the snow-bunting:

"Along the narrow sandy height
I watch them swiftly come and go,
Or round the leafless wood,
Like flurries of wind-driven snow,
Revolving in perpetual flight,
A changing multitude.

Nearer and nearer still they sway,
And, scattering in a circled sweep,
Rush down without a sound;
And now I see them peer and peep,
Across yon level bleak and gray,
Searching the frozen ground,—

Until a little wind upheaves,
And makes a sudden rustling there,
And then they drop their play,
Flash up into the sunless air,
And *like a flight of silver leaves*
Swirl round and sweep away."

That last stanza, or, indeed, the entire lyric, is almost photographic in its accuracy.

"In New England it is styled the Snow-

flake; 'it comes and goes with these beautiful crystallizations, as if itself one of them, and comes at times only less thickly. The Snow-bird is the harbinger and, sometimes, the follower of the storm. It seems to revel, to live on snow, and rejoices in the northern blast, uttering overhead with expanded wing its merry call, "*preete-preete!*" reserving, as travelers tell us, a sweet, pleasant song for its summer haunts in the far North, where it builds its warm, compact nest on the ground, or in the fissures of rocks on the coast of Greenland.' The Snow-bird is part and parcel of Canada. It typifies the country just as much as the traditional Beaver, recently abstracted as an emblem, from *Jean Baptiste* by the Scotch descendants of the Earl of Sterling, on whose arms it figured as early as 1632, according to Douglass Brymner.

"Thousands of these hardy migrants, borne aloft on the breath of March storms, come each spring, whirling round the heights of Charlesburg, or launch their serried squadrons over the breezy uplands of the lovely isle facing Quebec, the Isle of Orleans; one islander alone last spring, to my knowledge, having snared more than one hundred dozen for the Quebec, Montreal, and United States markets.

"The merry, robust *'Oiseau Blanc'* is indeed the national bird of French Canada: It successfully inspired the lays of more than one of its native poets. In his early and poetical youth the respected historian of Canada, Garneau, found in the Snow-bird a congenial subject for an ode, one of his best pieces; and the Laureate, Fréchette, is indebted to his pindaric effusion, *'L'Oiseau Blanc,'* for a large portion of the laurel crown awarded him by the 'Forty Immortals' of the French Academy.

"Had I, like Garneau and Fréchette, been gifted with a spark of the poetic fire, I, too, might have been tempted to immortalize in song this dear friend of my youth. Right well can I recall those, alas! distant, those enchanted, early days, whose winters were colder! sunshine brighter! snowdrifts higher! than those of these degenerate times! Right well do I remember Montmagny (St. Thomas, as it was then called) and its vast meadows, peering out under the rays of a March sun, swarming with Snow-birds, Shore-larks, and occasionally some Lapland Longspurs, feeding there in the early morning, or with the descending shadows of eve. Those far-stretching fields, facing the Manor House to the

north, how oft at sunset have I not stalked over them, bearing home to my aviary the numerous captives found fluttering in my horse-hair snares, listening as I sauntered along to the low, continuous warble of my feathered friends taking their evening meal!

"With what zest boyhood can recall those animated, fleecy clouds darting across whitened fields, or hovering in a graceful cluster over distant tree-tops, and defying with their glossy, wintry plumage the icy blast of the north! Methinks I can yet recall on a bright April morning a myriad of these hardy little fellows dropping from the summit of a large elm, a shade-tree in the pasturage, and lighting, like a fall of snow, on the meadow, to pick up grass-seed or grain forgotten from the previous summer! With the ornithologist, Minot, I am quite prepared to recognize the Snowflake as 'the most picturesque of our winter birds, which often enlivens an otherwise dreary scene, especially when flying, for they then seem almost like an animated storm.'"*

To the retention of its sweetest song to the scene and season of completest solitude, as al-

*Sir James M. Le Moine, "The Birds of Quebec."

leged by the foregoing writer, one of the clearest of our Canadian singers* alludes:

A SECRET SONG.

"O snow-bird! snow-bird!
Welcome thy note when maple boughs are bare,
Thy merry twitter, thy emphatic call,
Like silver trumpets pierce the freezing air
What time the crystal flakes begin to fall.
We know thy secret! When the day grows dim,
Far from the homes that thou hast cheered so long,
Thy chirping changes to a twilight hymn.
O snow-bird, snow-bird, wherefore hide thy song!

"O snow-bird! snow-bird!
Is it a song of sorrow none may know,
An aching memory? Nay, too glad the note.
Untouched by knowledge of our human woe,
Clearly the crystal flutings fall and float.
We hear thy tender ecstasy and cry:
'Lend us thy gladness that can brave the chill;
Under the splendors of the winter sky,
O snow-bird, snow-bird, carol to us still!'"

"Far distant sounds the hidden chickadee
Close at my side." —Lowell.

* Elizabeth G. Roberts McDonald.

Another cheery little tenant of our winter woods is the familiar chickadee, who, more distinctly than Robert of Lincoln, tells his name to all the hills, and pipes it through all the bare arcades of the forest. If you see the plump, downy little fellow, of brisk, pert ways, with his black poll and white face and breast, and yet do not know him, just wait till he speaks—he will tell you who he is! If he is not so much as Jack Robin a man-lover, haunting the places of human habitation, yet he is by no means a shy and fearful bird, and can easily be won by the friendly and gentle who approach his haunts. "Perhaps," says Bradford Torrey, "no wild bird is more confiding. If a man is at work in the woods in cold weather, and at luncheon will take a little pains to feed the chickadees that are sure to be more or less about him, he will soon have them tame enough to pick up crumbs at his feet, and even to take them from his hands." And he assures us that by the practice of scattering scraps of suet, and such other tidbits as they like, they may be easily enticed and lured about our homes; where, if well treated, they will become domestic and familiar. A tough little fellow is the chickadee, who bat-

tens in the midst of snow and frost, never failing of his daily food, and fearing neither "winter nor rough weather." He is no prodigal, however, and no absentee from our clime, spending the entire season, and, like the elder brother, never deserting the home folks. He can easily be called by the imitation of his notes, and will put in his appearance; but, as if gifted with a testy sort of a good humor, he will sometimes dart at his impertinent summoner, with a laughably indignant little "*de-de-de,*" and then fly off, calling his familiars into the deeper wood.

CHICKADEE.

On a spray of the pine-tree,
On a spray of the pine-tree,
In this keenest winter weather,
With thy mate, blithe chickadee,
Thou canst sit and sing together,—
Chick-a-dee-dee-dee!

Wildest storm, on bitterest day,
Can not drive our bird away,—
Hardy little forest ranger!
Here thou sing'st thy favorite lay,
Dreaming not of harm or danger;—
Chick-a-dee-dee-dee!

Searching for thy food the trees,
Hung like flyer on trapeze,
Then, erect for blithest singing
Thy scant song, that still can please,
Through the wood's cold arcades ringing—
Chick-a-dee-dee-dee!

VIII.

Out beyond yonder bluff that reaches into the stream, where, under the scales of its icy armor, the serpent-river comes circling, a murky mist is hanging. It is the morning breath of the city,—white wreaths of steam, commingled with darker volumes of coal-smoke. Palpitant gushes are belched from the factory behind that most distant point visible, rising into a pallid column skyward. Dark specks are moving on the river; the larger are horses, the smaller are men. There the crystal floor, swept clean, is being taken up, and a space of black water appears. The smooth-sawn cubes are hoisted up the steep bank into one of the huge buildings that loom above the Penobscot shore from Orrington to Norombega town. The harvest of the fields is matched by the harvest of the river.

Look upon this great world-palace of china

and of crystal! But this can not linger. Blossom and leaf hasten away, but this beauty is fleeter. Yet a week may not see it utterly vanish, for it seems substantial, even massy. It has seized everything,—springs, chutes, bridges, wires, wells, brooks. The foamy falls down yonder ravine are in its grip. A gray mist still hovers and broods over the scene. It is the face-cloth that shall be removed to show not death, but life.

IX.

A recent dawn had with it some strange thing of visionary kind, that I do not mind telling you of. Night is the friendly harbor of ghosts, and enigmas that need the after-presence of the magician,—or, failing him, of Joseph or Daniel; but I beg you will not press me hard for my meaning, since mortals have christened mine a day-dream,—

"And morning dreams, as poets tell, are true,"*

needing no interpretation.

I saw a wide pasture skirted by the wilderness, with barren mountains stretching beyond, having spikes of dead trees upon them, and

*Michael Bruce.

deep rifts, with gloomy pitfalls between. The plain was dimming in the eventide, but I saw there was little flowering or greenness, only russet stubble, with richer-looking hilltops here and there. Scattered over this wide field, and strayed into the adjacent wilderness, was a great flock of creatures having the bodies of sheep, with human visages, of which there was great variety, as to youth and age, beauty and deformity. In the center of the pasture, where they huddled together in the greatest number, as waiting for the folding, I saw one solitary man, whom I supposed to be the shepherd. He was clad in black, smoothly kept, and his ruddy head was smooth-shaven. I wondered to see him seated beside a wheelbarrow laden with faded manuscripts, one of which he held in his hand, while others were scattered all around the stone on which he sat. He seemed engrossed in perusing, or absorbed in his own thinking, except that now and again he lifted his face, with an air of furtive jealousy, and his keen eyes swept the outskirts of the field,—not indeed to see whether any of his flock strayed into the wilderness, which they continually did,—but to guard against the sudden appearance of some rival shepherd. While he

sat there, a tempest broke loose among the mountains, and crashing through the wilderness upon the plain, drove the sheep this way and that in great confusion. The lightnings flashed upon each other, as swords that are crossed in combat; the winds were maddened, and the thunders, like wild beasts, roared at one another; while the sea, not far away, lifted its angry voice all along the shore. Exposed, the flock were shrinking vainly from its fury; but the shepherd covered his papers and himself with a penthouse, which he suddenly uplifted, and he counted the storm a luxury. By and by it was over, and the moon shone over their dripping fleeces; when down the mountain sides, leading over the barren backs of stone the half-perished wanderers, came another shepherd, bearing the helpless ones in his bosom, and gathering a little flock for loving ministry. As soon as he appeared on the outskirts of the wilderness, or touched the field wherein the solitary shepherd sat, he leaped from his seat and commenced herding his flock with great diligence, running out to the borders of the plain and seeking to bring them into the center. "Wait," said the new shepherd; "these be my sheep whom ye are driving

in; give me chance to collect mine own." Yet he paid no heed, but with greater flourish swept round the field, and made as if he would drive his associate out. "What signifies a few poor sheep," he cries, "whether they be yours or mine? Do we not work both to the same end? I bid you God-speed!" So he swept the new shepherd's lambs into his woolly multitude, and went on herding them as before. Just then there strayed up to me an idle comer, of whose cold, curled lip I inquired why this strange shepherd had come upon the other's ground. "Would," he said, "he had come sooner. Every day this man has tarried in this place, and the wilderness has not known him. As for the strayed of the flock, he has not so much as cared for their fleeces, though every day more and more of them have tumbled over the rocks, or got fouled with mud and briers." As I walked near the penthouse I saw that some one had written thereon: "THIS IS THE GUARDIAN OF SHIBBOLETH." Then, to the sound of a trumpet and the accents of a mighty voice, with words I could not distinguish, I started, and awoke.

X.

A ride by moonlight! Surely this is a region where all the creatures of poetry are naturalized and have immemorially dwelt. My steed seems spirit only; never did sledge or sleigh have lighter, easier motion; never bells a more fairy-sweetness in their jingle. Tens of thousands they are—these silver fireflies that seem to cluster and glance amid the crystalline branches. The landscape is etched on ivory. Now, it has the New Jerusalem whiteness! Those maiden-birches are Beauty in desolation— white nuns, everywhere bowing in agony of prayer. All around me the trees lean, as if wearily, and some seem falling with arms outstretched, like men pierced with bullets. Some are curled and doubled under their white woe, as if they shrank and cowered in mortal terror. Here are the Laöcoons of the forest. The same abounding nature, that expresses the serenity of beauty, gives here a beautiful awe, and speaks the passion of dismay.

Mount Hope or High Head may now satisfy the outward eye, but the inner eye has visions beside. Fancy builds and storms her

ice-palaces on Mount Royal, or goes in a snow-shoe procession to the gates of Ville Marie by wooded paths of the St. Lawrence. We dream of winter glories, like Niagara and Montmorency, of icicle-beaded woods and mountains of Laurentia, beyond the frown of the Saguenay, where bleak kings of the forest stand in melancholy grandeur, and glassy scalps hold up a mirror to the moon. We wander in fancy along the shores of Huron or Superior, and hear the grinding of the tide as it lifts the huge floes, and see the glimmer of the ice-scales on the rocks.

XI.

The sun breaks forth upon the scene, and makes all beauty manifest. Welcome, Great Revealer! The dazzled world repeats thy glory! Before, the loveliness below was subdued; now it is glorious—jubilant! We see God now! It is no legend: "He causeth the vapors to ascend. He giveth snow like wool; he scattereth the hoar frost like ashes. He casteth forth his ice like morsels." Yes, and now he kindles every particle! Over all rides the triumphant sun!

"A splendor brooking no delay
Beckons and tempts my feet away.

I leave the trodden village highway
For virgin snow-paths glimmering through
A jeweled elm-tree avenue;

Where keen against the walls of sapphire,
The gleaming tree-bolls, ice-embossed,
Hold up their chandeliers of frost.

. . . . . .

What miracle of weird transforming
Is this wild work of frost and light,
This glimpse of glory infinite!

This foregleam of the Holy City,
Like that to him of Patmos given,
The white Bride coming down from Heaven!"

O for a perch to-day, on Kineo or Katahdin, and a moment to stand at gaze!

We open our New Testament at the page that looks out from a "mountain apart," and read for our devotions: "He was transfigured before them. And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them."

Now, if anything but clean light came out of the sky, it seems as if it might be a snow of fire.

Lowell, in his "Good Word for Winter," paints the frosty and the snowy phase; he can not do justice to this mingling of ice and fire: "What a cunning silversmith is Frost! The rarest workmanship of Delhi or Genoa copies him but clumsily. . . . Fernwork and lacework and filagree in endless variety, and under it all the water tinkles like a distant guitar, or drums like a tambourine, or gurgles like the Tokay of an anchorite's dream. Beyond doubt there is a fairy procession marching along those frail arcades and translucent corridors."

But we return to the visions of the seer of Amesbury, and the earlier seer:

"This foregleam of the Holy City."

What was that the poet of Patmos saw—the astonishment come down from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride for her husband? Surely this easy miracle might vie with that in its dazzling purity! But *that*—ah! *that was Permanence.* John saw the things that shall remain. But *this is Evanescence;*—yet, not altogether so; for, though these forms shall perish, the ever-appearing, shadowy, change-

able Beauty shall abide within the renewing body, and be here forever. Then—

"Let the strange frost-work sink and crumble,
And let the loosened tree-boughs swing,
Till all their bells of silver ring."

Shine, thou sun! blow, thou south wind!

"Breathe through a veil of tenderest haze
The prophecy of summer days.

Come with thy green relief of promise,
And to this dead, cold splendor bring
The living jewels of the spring!"

Amen! So say we all!

Our Doctor at Grand-Pré.

"Is any sick? the man of Ross relieves,
Prescribes, attends, the medicine makes and gives."
—Pope, "Moral Essays."

THE school is out for recess! Or perhaps it is the noon-hour that has come; for the boys are pouring out of the school-room, with the gurgling glee of water out of a bottle. Why could they not in that day come out with a stately, regular march, as they do nowadays, and to appropriate music; not as "bees bizz out," or as swallows come from under the eaves of a barn? Well now, my dear (it is you, reader, I refer to), you discover your unsophisticated nature. We did not have the telephone and the modern drill in King Canute's time; while, as for a grand piano, it could not have been got in at the door of our old school-house, and would have filled up the room when it was in. Then, at the same time, why should not "boys be boys" while they have wit enough?

But, to return from our digression, we said the boys are coming out, and the girls, also—and plenty of noise they are making, you may be sure. If you ever read Hood's poem of Eugene Aram,—why, you know all; for he tells you in brief measure just how it was done:—

"There were some that ran and some that leapt,
Like troutlets in a pool."

I said *they,* did I? That shows me to have ceased from being a boy, and to have become a proper old fogy;—though it may be the time for that, as my hair is thinning out. I should have said *we*—for *I* was surely among them. O school-fellows! it *was we*—it was *our very selves* who rushed out at that corner door, just opened, and flung our arms abroad and tossed our caps in the air—just as it is done now once a year on Dominion-day, but just as we did it every day then—with a *whoop* and a *whoop-la!* before we proceeded

"To chase the rolling circle's speed
Or urge the flying ball."

And, I declare to you, school-fellows, if I could take a week's vacation into boyhood, I would without scruple do the same thing over again;

after which, as I am assured, I should return to my staid and proper personality much refreshed.

Hark! there is a rattle of wheels along by the roadside apple-trees yonder—those crooked old patriarchs that stoop over the fence from the Crowell Farm. Their gnarled and shagged branches gave us an umbrageous shelter on hot days, and dropped part of their fruit where it was most convenient for us. Boys are so indolent they decline to climb a fence, unless there is need for it; but when the need is great, and the high-top sweeting is in the middle of the orchard and will not come to them, they will sometimes strain a point; that is, the boys I had to go with would, and I am not answerable for the superior virtue of these times. But the apples that fell from the Crowell trees —O my! you would n't eat them now!—but now you have n't the teeth. We were glad then to pick up the crabbedest knurlins, and to pelt the branches for more.

But I was saying something about "a rattling of wheels," when, of course, I interrupted myself with a digression—a minister's and a pedagogue's unfailing habit. And wheels had cause for rattling on our roads, since in a

country village I never knew them better or harder. When, in my later peregrinations, I have had too much occasion to travel over a country where the new road was a good many inches below the old one, I have wished for a few cartloads of our blue Acadian gravel and the diligent hand of the macadamizer.

"Hullo! here comes the doctor!" (The wheels might have rattled out of sight while I am getting to my story.) It is the general cry; and then all the boys and girls set off to meet the advancing carriage as soon as it is in sight. It is Dr. B——n, of Grand-Pré, our village Æsculapius, and a venerable favorite among boys and girls. He is a standing rebuke to all disease that, where it is possible to disengage itself, spreads its melancholy vans immediately on his arrival. There he is! with his full, rubicund countenance, and his wig of brown hair; and not a boy is afraid of him in all the country round. A "noticeable man" is he; though his eyes are not "gray," but blue, and not "large," but of the medium size, and he has a face and figure to command attention —at the hustings and in the legislative hall— as well as in the invalid's chamber. I know not how many terms he has served his native

county in the Provincial House of Assembly. I assure you, reader, he is a man of parts, and of much consideration. He wins many a salute and many a nod and smile as he passes along, sitting stoutly erect in his buggy. But what at this point I would chiefly impress upon the stolid and impenetrable especially, is that when among the "young folks" he is the rollicking incarnation of humorous good-nature; and though his place by right of years may be among the elders,—and he can figure there and acquit himself with some credit,—yet wanting their tameness and gravity, he is as likely as not to be classed with the boys—being a dear friend of the lovers of hopscotch, leap-frog, and of bat and ball.

Under his seventy winters he stands (or sits, as I have not yet got him out of his carriage) in his brown wig, aforementioned, without a visible sprinkle of frost—or, for that matter, one flake of the snow that Boreal Age commonly sifts upon us before our threescore years are told. Something was infused into his happy composition that made nugatory the decree of Time, so far as his appearance is concerned. He has stood in his time among other than mean men; but among boys he will assert

his former boyhood and maintain a perpetual youth. And well he may do this, for now at this very moment under the aforesaid wig shines his face like a ruddy apple—not one of the Crowell knurlins—a veritable sun of good humor, whence little rays of cheerfulness come streaming wherever he goes. Tennyson describes the "busy wrinkles" round the eyes of his miller: they were round our doctor's eyes. Are they not round the eyes of every practical, sagacious, good-natured man, of sufficient breadth of countenance, who has in him the spice of humor? The wrinkles around our doctor's eyes were "busy" and merry; and as for his ruddy cheeks, he got them, he tells me, on the farm of his father before he was eighteen years old, and that too by feeding on wheat bread, with plenty of new milk, avoiding condiments and carnivorous foods. So it happens that he is a heart of oak. Let him but alight, and, like the farmer of Tilsbury Vale, face and figure will be a pleasant medicine to the eye:

"Erect as a sunflower he stands, and the streak
Of the unfaded rose still enlivens his cheek.
'Mid the dews, in the sunshine of morn,—'mid the joy
Of the fields, he collected that bloom when a boy;

> There fashion'd that countenance, which, in spite of a stain
> That his life hath received, to the last will remain.
> A farmer he was; and his house far and near
> Was the boast of the country for excellent cheer."

Yes, and you should hear him talk about that farm-life! Whereupon you would conclude there was one mode only for a scholar and a gentleman; and that the man who can not be happy in that vicinage and vocation lacks in himself something essential to happiness. His lusty youth was not only nourished on fresh milk and brown-bread, but on a continuous diet of wholesome labor, with scents and sights of barn and byre and clover fields and breaths of spring mornings and crisp November airs. Farmer he still is, as well as doctor and man of affairs; farmer he will be to the end, blooming brightly to the close, and wearing like an everlasting flower.

But I shall give you the impression that our doctor is not a rapid driver, we are so long in getting him out of sight. Very erroneous such a conception of him would be; for he is not inclined to creep upon the road—nor anywhere else, and has the veritable genius for "getting there." But the boys are just

now ready to intercept him, though he should attempt the part of a Jehu. As he comes clattering up by the schoolhouse, followed by his youthful bodyguard in laughing commotion, he shakes—a very mirthful jelly, while that rubicund face flushes ruddier. He knows them, every one, from the hour they were delivered into the hands of the nurse; he has doctored the people of the village for many a year, and brought their successive tribes through the whooping cough and measles; so —being a bachelor, though I had not heretofore mentioned that fact—he claims a certain proprietary right in the whole of them—or, I should have said, the whole of *us!* As we crowd around him, he leans over in his mirth, and shakes his whip at us on either side—and even behind—and cries out, amid laughter, *"O you whippersnappers! you whippersnappers! Get on here if you can!"* Then he starts up his horse, and the children stream after him in full cry; so he slackens up directly, and as his pace comes to a walk, leans over to banter them. In they climb, over the back or in any way they can, till the buggy is full, and they hang on behind, while he is happy. Why did he never have wife and children, while so

many, of soured or shriveled social and domestic nature, are scowling on both? "Here, you rogues! what are you doing?" he exclaims, as a copy of "Felix Holt, the Radical," that has been lying open on the seat, is thrust to the ground by their shuffling feet, and a wheel passes over it. It is restored; and, as he is already overloaded, he starts up again at a good pace, the rest running still behind, while again he leans laughingly to snap his whip at the stragglers, slowly lagging at last and unable to hold on. *"Get away! Get away!"* he exclaims, in a new ebullition of spirits—buoyant as a cork on the swell of a wave: *"Get away! the old mare has had enough of you!"* The little fellow with the straw hat, ragged and rimless, is helped to the seat beside him; and the little miss—a pert pet—is taken on his knee to be kissed, and to have him pull her ringlets, and talk sweet, amusing nonsense to her. So I see him ride on through the village, and down the descending road, dropping his passengers here and there, till he arrives where, from the green hillside, you may notice how Hantsport gleams whitely at the feet of her oaks by the Avon's margin, and how the bending river sparkles in the sun.

Dear old bachelor-doctor! You have gone

out of our sight now—out of all men's sight, and we may speak of you; yet with no ill intent. Your memory lives with us in a halo of benevolence, and if we had not liked you—virtues and faults notwithstanding—you had not figured on this page. Dear old bachelor-doctor! You are among the unforgetables! When shall we hear again that glorious laugh of yours—or one like it? that matchless stutter, in which you excelled Charles Lamb! By the way, was it not you who first told me that story about Lamb's vain endeavor to tell the manipulator at the bath how many times he should be dipped? There was laughter when you did it; where you were and one other there was often reason for laughter. Many a time I 've heard you quote the lines of Goldsmith about the schoolmaster's jokes and the "counterfeited glee" of the children; but our "glee" was not "counterfeited" when you uttered your *bon mots.* What if the jokes were sometimes retorted, you were always ready when occasion came round again.*

* "Ye 'll find no *change* in me," he had said, humorously, to one who applied to him, as road commissioner, for "a little change" to repair a bridge "Faith, Doctor," was the reply, "ye 're often changin' yer coat since I knew ye."

"Are you going to vote for me?" he asked an inconsequential colored man, just before election, merely to hoax him. "No, Doctah, I don' vote fer no one; I jes' stan's *mutual.*"

Where is that face which shines, even as Katrine's morning mirror,* but sometimes it bears the shadow of a cloud? And so have I seen, even upon *your* face, and when you deemed them unobserved, looks sadly serious enough. On the day of an amputation, when the boy with whom you had sported, and who had ridden with you on lonely roads in many a gloaming hour, must come under your surgical hand, the knife you wielded seemed to enter your own heart. When the mother entered, and saw her child lie pale and bleeding, with eyes closed as one dead, the paleness was on your face also, and your eyes were wet. I hear you say to her: "Some people accuse the doctors of being hard-hearted. It is not so—it is not so! They must master their emotion, they must put it into their hard work." No, you could not cut brother-flesh, nor stand beside a dying neighbor, without emotion. Prompt, executive, when anything must be done; a man of affairs, dealing closely with

*"Not Katrine, in her mirror blue,
Gives back the shaggy banks more true
Than every free-born glance confess'd
The guileless movements of her breast."
—Scott.

such as closely deal; not always and altogether without reproach and the hint of spotted garments; yet you were warm, friendly, companionable—yes, and generous, too. I owe to you something of my passion for letters; and you were a free lender of books—for which I have often had reason to thank you. But were you not swayed overmuch by your partialities? as witness a dialogue like the following:

I.—Have you a copy of Shelley's poems in your library?

You.—I believe I have (I know you had, for I have found it there) a copy of Shelley. But what of that? *You* do not want Shelley.

I.—I have seen some of his shorter poems, and like them. I think him one of the most *inspired* of poets.

You.—Inspired! (Suppress that contempt, doctor!) What are inspired poets? There are none such. That is nonsense! Poets, like other writers, express their own ideas in their own way.

I.—Well, my way. I would like to see the book.

You.—Such books are not wholesome for young minds. Shelley is mist and moonshine. Some men have their feet on the earth and

their head in the clouds; but Shelley was in the clouds bodily. You could not understand him; nobody understands him. I will not bring you Shelley.

And you did not; but you brought me many a human and humorous tome; and as a sop—an atonement for denial—you brought me a "Hudibras," with my name written on the title-page.

Dear old bachelor-doctor! my companion, friend, and comfortable physician in many an hour that delighted or tried my soul! My host and mentor—often my charioteer—in sunbright days and moonlit evenings, when rapt with nature and the muse. Had I the pen of genius I would make you immortal; you should shine with the gifted Galens of the past, as worthy of them. I care not now that you were too often skeptical in supersensuous matters; you had a firm grip of mundane realities, like old Montaigne, and a hearty relish for earth's joys. I have seen men more noble, more gifted, more admirable; but the memory that is earliest and tenderest leads back to you. I, at least, have not forgotten you; and to me your rosy face seems now as real and present to my imagination, as if I had

seen it but yesterday. I have a portrait of Halleck, upon which I love to look; for, besides its own openness and nobleness, there is something there that recalls you. Whatever your faults—and I am not to disclose them—you loved children, and the dumb and helpless creatures of the earth found in you an ever considerate friend. With you dwelt the old humanities; the flavor of by-gone precious books was in your thought and speech, and to you "the poetry of earth was never dead," nor the muse's tongue silent. In my breast you abide tenderly, for you helped to awaken in me the half-slumbering desire of song, and you showed me where many a poetic treasure lay hidden. How you exulted in Poet Butler, and Poet Burns! How, as the carriage rattled over the summer roads, by the hour would you recite to me the choice passages with which your memory was well stored! How you exalted the masters, and alternately petted and scouted the poetlings! And when I recounted my childish gains and hopes, and poured my schoolboy aspirations and ambitions, or perhaps my fears and sorrows, into your ear, you encouraged, praised, or soothed me—chiding, if need of chiding arose—yet always tenderly

judicious. You entertained me with the quaint essence of pedagogic lore. Through you I learned to know and to love Goldsmith. The picture, hung in the parlor of your home, of the old Irish schoolmaster, with his severe, frowning face, and the upraised switch, which is soon to come down on Phelim's rueful pate, —and your familiar recitation of—

> "Well had the boding tremblers learned to trace
> The day's disasters in his morning face,—"

are they not among the choicest of memory's treasures! Where shall I find in modern elocution the gusto, the fine *eclat*, and magnificent abandon with which you endowed the matchless, immortal lines of "Tam O' Shanter," as we rode at evening in sweet solitude together by the red winding banks between which the little Gaspereau debouches into Minas, and by the marshes of Avonport, making the old covered bridge ring again, as you flourished your whip and shouted,—

> "Kings may be blest, but Tam was glorious,
> O'er a' the ills of life victorious!"

Then, when I suggested that this was almost equal to Byron, you would most emphatically

declare that Byron never saw the day when he could have written such a piece.

But you were never happier than when the strain turned on your old literary idol, "Hudibras!" How suddenly would you break out with,—

"When civil dudgeon first grew high,
And men fell out, they knew not why;
When hard words, jealousies, and fears,
Set folk together by the ears,
And made them fight, like mad or drunk,
For Dame Religion, as for punk;
Whose honesty they all durst swear for,
Though not a man of them knew wherefore;
When Gospel Trumpeter, surrounded
With long-eared rout, to battle sounded,
Aud pulpit drum ecclesiastic
Was beat with fist instead of a stick;
Then did Sir Knight abandon dwelling,
And out he rode a coloneling."

By the time you had reached the last line, you were ready to break into a roar of laughter, and with what gesticulations and wild peals of mirth would you affirm, "O! but that Butler was a great fellow!" It matters not that the satirist is lessened in my esteem, and my sympathies are with the Puritan people whom

he lampooned; I must still enjoy the memory of your deep appreciation.

Then how you could recite *"Willie brewed a peck o' maut,"* or other of the bacchanal, rollicking, social, tipsy strains of your favorite Burns. And again I hear you compliment Tom Moore, and depreciate him, almost in the same breath. You were often heard humming his Irish Melodies, and sometimes you would sing them outright. I hear you now:

"Keep this cup, which is now o'erflowing,
To grace your revel when I 'm at rest;
Never, O, never its balm bestowing
On lips that beauty hath seldom blest.
But when some warm, devoted lover
To her he adores shall bathe its brim,
Then, then around my spirit shall hover
And hallow each drop that foams for him!"

As soon as you were done singing you would turn to me, saying, in a tone of mock disgust: "There, is n't *that* pretty nonsense! One likes to hum it over well enough; but it is all sound —sound, and not a rational idea in it!" Then what laughable stories would you tell of the profession—of old Dr. Abernethy, and his rough ways; and of the practitioner at ran-

dom, who left behind him this sly bit for epitaph:

"When folks are sick they send for I;
I physics, bleeds, and sweats 'em:
Sometimes they live, sometimes they die;—
What's that to I?—
I Letsome."

Ah! what glorious stuttering and laughter! Did Wilkins Micawber, Esq., ever have better times with his friends, or more entirely for the time being forget or overcome his sorrows? But all these magniloquent shows end; this mirth dies in the distance, and a silence falls. Said I not of laughter, it is vain? O know you not, sad Ecclesiastes, that an hour of honest mirth in quieter times is pleasant to remember?—yet there is pathos in the memory! It is not far from laughter to tears, and there is a spot at last where pure *bonhommie*, like animal courage, evaporates. Stay! stalwart form, mirthful presence! Did I ever see you sad? Sad for others you had often need to be, and even yours was the end appointed for all living; but where did I ever behold a face that could be *so* radiant, save one, on which the light of heaven itself was then shin-

ing? When you return in memory how often it is with a semblance of Wordsworth's "Gray-haired Man of Glee!"

> "The sighs that Matthew heaved were sighs
> Of one tired out with fun and madness;
> The tears which came to Matthew's eyes
> Were tears of light, the dew of gladness."

Surely the lines might have been written for you! Still, to me you remain as I used to see you, and as you were on this schoolboy day of mine, your lips, your eyes gave no hint of the "speechless dust" to which they have since gone.

Perhaps, on some Saturday evening in late October, when printers' types were dropped and office cares dismissed, I have stolen away to the sitting-room of your house, to which I had *entree*, as to a public library or reading-room. The place is empty and quiet; the lamp unlit, but the firelight in the open grate glances on the floor, and brightens the dark wainscoting. I take up a copy of *Blackwood*, or *The Westminster*, maybe, and turn the leaves, not reading much, but musing, and hearing the autumn wind in the shrubbery outside—listening for the sounding of your feet

upon the flight of stone steps, and the opening of the heavy door. The younger brother, sharer of the home with you, is not here, and I do not see even the domestic. It may be, for the *nonce*, a delightful solitude; but, ah! doctor, has it not been too much a solitude for you?

"His wee bit ingle blinkin bonnily,
His clane hearth-stane, his thriftie wifie's smile,
The little infant prattling on his knee." . . .

I have heard you give the lines pathetic intonation. But yet no sweet-faced woman swept your hearth, and put the beech-wood on the fire, or kissed you in your hour of weary-heartedness, and called you, "husband." Happier for you, I sometimes think it might have been, in your declining years. No little children—much as you loved them—gamboled in your firelight, or with sweetest looks and words sat on your knee at evening, and brought heaven a little nearer to your heart. Well, I know not why you failed of this; maybe He withheld this supreme gift who is good not only in that which he gives, but also in that which he denies. At last you come in from some chilly ride over the hills to distant

patients; then, after you have supped, we sit by the firelight, until it is time to take the candle and go to bed.

. . . . . .

I left the horse and buggy in the charge of my companion, while I went up the slope to the graveyard of the little Episcopal church at W——. It rises out of embowering green, and the white headstones are ranged in clean lines along the soft grass, and at the head of each mound. Ha! this is yours! A plain upright slab of marble bears the familiar name,

"E—L—B."

And here is a familiar symbol,—a white hand, with index finger pointing upward. Has it relation, O departed spirit, to thy aspiration or destiny?

"Sic itur ad astra."

O friend of my boyhood,—

"Can it be
That this is all remains of thee?"

. . . . . .

Ha! the wheels have rattled away out of hearing; the doctor is hastening to his patients; the bell rings out of the school-house door, and

the children come trooping back; from the shelter of the old apple-trees again the little human bees buzz eddying into the hive.

. . . What is this? Surely it is the falling of the balm-of-Gilead buds! I scent the aromatic memory. Change, and sorrow, and loss,—yet, somehow the heart leaps up, as of old, when the spring is here!

The Grace of Death.

I.

"Come, lovely and soothing Death,
Undulate round the world, serenely arriving, arriving,
In the day, in the night, to all, to each,
Sooner or later, delicate Death.
Praised be the fathomless universe,
For life and joy, and for objects and knowledge curious,
And for love, sweet love—But praise! praise! praise!
For the sure-enwinding arms of cool-enfolding Death."
—Whitman.

"Many a time
I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Called him soft names in many a musèd rhyme."
—Keats.

And so have I, when, as sorrow's friendly minister, I have stood to gaze silently, where many eyes were looking. And how their glances differ! Some are eager, and curious; some are tender with mist of tears; some yearn, and dwell long over the image beloved;

some are so shaded with crape they can not be seen. Can you tell us how those shaded eyes see? Or if they gaze upon the rosebud babe; or one whose maidenly charm is best spoken by the flower full-blown; or the settled content, where all has at last been attained, of one who, "full of years, and ripe in wisdom, lays his silver temples in their last repose?"

I have had glimpses of Israfil, in many of his moods, and in many of mine; variously decked have I looked upon him, and sometimes grotesquely attired. For our vanities impose strangely upon him, and often we hang his native grace with the solemn mimicry of our woe. Yet, underneath all, there is the gracious stateliness, such as the marble that was molded by Phidias can not image, and a shining attire known best to the angels.

II.

"O lovely appearance of death!" exclaimed the hymnist who delighted most in rapture and rhapsody. He was there, where sober Folly dresses in her heaviest sables, just in time; for this, like all beauty born where flowers fade, is evanescent, and soon

"Decay's effacing fingers
Have swept the lines where beauty lingers."

A seraph might, perhaps, sing thus, up at the altitude of the jasper foundation: "O just and eloquent and mighty Death," great is thy victorious loveliness, who hast been the passion of poets and of saints, and who, like the pyramidal flame, reachest forever upward! Our evangelical poet was worthy of Israfil,—the angel who turns our face toward the morning, and the place where "the shadows flee away," rather than the grosser shape from the region of ghastliness. But a more mundane minstrel, with veins sometimes swelling with unchastened fire,—the son of pride and passion,—who also looked, and saw the grace of death, marked, to portray

> "The mild angelic air,
> The rapture of repose that 's there."

We returned to dwell once more upon those homely, but striking, features,—

> "He looked so grand when he was dead!"

And this was not the earl, in all his hateful beauty. It was an old farmer, who had ceased to till his scanty acres,—waging an unequal war with poverty,—and he was then newly laid to that repose which no impertinent morn-

ing can disturb, in a room so barely furnished you would get from it no artistic or literary suggestion. It was one of the tamest farmsteads in rustic Maine. Yet he who rested in that plain coffin had such a touch of majesty as death sometimes gives. My friend, who looked with me, drew back, with an air of surprise, and said to me, after we had gone out: "What a remarkable face! He looked like Emerson, lying there so quietly!" What, then, had you gazed upon the face of Shakespeare, just before it became forever invisible, at Stratford-on-Avon? What if you had looked into the glorious orbs of Burns,—of which "the last minstrel" has given us a tradition,—and then had seen them veiled for all time, when the people were about to bear him to his grave in old St. Michael's? One has said well, who has not always said well.* In speaking of this world's favorite, he exclaimed: "How that man rose above all his fellows in death! Do you know, there is something wonderful in death? What repose! What a piece of sculpture! The common man dead, looks royal; a genius dead, sublime."

*Robert G. Ingersoll.

III.

The grace of death has rarely had a finer illustration that that given us by Eckermann in his memorials of one of the most magnificent of geniuses: "The morning after Goethe's death, a deep longing came over me to see his earthly shell once again. His faithful servant, Frederick, opened the door where they had laid him. Stretched upon his back, he lay like one asleep, power and deep peace upon the features of his sublimely noble face. The mighty brow seemed still busy with thoughts. I longed for a lock of his hair, but reverence forbade my cutting it. The body lay nude, wrapped in a white sheet. Frederick threw the sheet open, and I was amazed at the godlike magnificence of those limbs. The chest was exceeedingly powerful, broad and arched; the arms and thighs full and muscular; the feet of perfect form, and nowhere on the body a trace of superfluous flesh, or of emaciation or shrinking. A perfect man lay in great beauty before me, and admiration made me for a moment forget that the immortal spirit had left such a habitation."

IV.

When and where did you first read, "The May Queen," of Tennyson,—that loveliest idyll of girlhood, dying ere her prime? Was it late in a summer evening, after you had brought the cows home, surrounded by the wide, fern-scented Acadian uplands,—fields and pastures whose paths were so sweet with balmy herbs that you have declared no others are like them? And when quiet had settled on all the folded hills stretching down toward glimmering Minas, and dimmer and dimmer grew "the long gray fields," would it be any shame if you lifted your eyes from the page, somewhat tearfully, having read, over and over again:

"There 's not a flower on all the hills; the frost is on the pane:
I only wish to live till the snowdrops come again;
I wish the snow would melt and the sun come out on high:
I long to see a flower so before the day I die.

The building rook 'll caw from the windy tall elm-tree,
And the tufted plover pipe along the fallow lea,

And the swallow 'ill come back again with summer
o'er the wave,
But I shall lie alone, mother, within the moldering
grave.

. . . . . .

All in the wild March morning I heard the angels
call:
It was when the moon was setting, and the dark
was over all;
The trees began to whisper, and the wind began to
roll,
When in the wild March morning I heard them call
my soul.

For lying broad awake I thought of you and Effie
dear;
I saw you sitting in the house, and I no longer
here;
With all my strength I prayed for both, and so I
felt resigned,
And up the valley came a swell of music on the
wind.

I thought that it was fancy, and listened in my
bed,
And then did something speak to me—I know not
what was said;
For great delight and shuddering took hold of all
my mind,
And up the valley came again the music on the
wind."

Is this all a fancy of the poet? The simple-minded cottager will tell you in good faith, and without embellishment, a like story. It was nearly midnight. An October moon was wallowing in cloud; the wind whitened the wave-crests of the St. Croix, at Bayside. They beat upon the shore just below the cottage of Master B——, in a chamber of which his daughter lay dying of a brain fever. Alice had been the white lamb of the Master's flock, the flower of all his garden; she was one of those gentle and beautiful beings to whose pathway we deem angels might stoop, haunting her footsteps, from pure love of her companionship. She had been delirious during several hours, and was now past any hope of recovery. Her head lay sidewise on the pillow, her golden hair damp with the dews of death; now and then she uttered a m n, and her bosom heaved convulsively. Suddenly a wild aerial melody outside was mingled with the voice of the wind. Every head was upraised, of those who wept and waited, and each looked to the other inquiringly:

"What harmony is this?—my good friends, hark!
Marvelous sweet music!"

The dying girl opened her eyes, and, with outstretched hands, exclaimed, "Angels! beautiful angels!" Then she collapsed, and ceased breathing; while, at the same moment, the aerial delicious melody seemed in the room, thrilling with a dreadful delight every one who heard it.

"And once again it came, and close beside the window bars;
Then seemed to go right up to heaven, and die among the stars."

Happy were the words of Richter, and a scene like this gives them new meaning: "Music is a bridge over which chastened and purified spirits enter a brighter world." When she was dressed for burial, she seemed beautiful as Elaine in the hour when, laid in her stately barge,

"The dead
Steered by the dumb went upward with the flood,—
In her right hand the lily, in her left
The letter—all her bright hair streaming down—
And all the coverlid was cloth of gold
Drawn to her waist, and she herself in white
All but her face, and that clear-featured face
Was lovely, for she did not seem as dead,
But fast asleep, and lay as though she smiled."

One standing beside her, as she lay in the little parlor of Master B.'s cottage, might have spoken these words, and they would have been fit for funeral song:

"Tread lightly—lest she sleep!—we did not know
That death could be so beautiful as this!
Infinite peace, on marble cheek and brow,
Lies like an angel's kiss.
In rapt repose, in sweet unconscious grace,
She sleeps—the fair hands lightly laid to rest;
A quiet, not of earth, is on her face,
Pure as the snowy flowers upon her breast.

It is not she, but the fine counterpart
Of all that she but yesterday did seem;
Fashioned and molded by divinest art;
Fair as a poet's dream!
Sacred as love,—though but the empty shrine
Whence life had fled to seek a higher goal,
Bearing the touch of messengers divine
That bore to fairer realms the fairest soul."*

V.

These are memorial images of my infancy: I see my baby-brother lying like a plucked flower, white and round, as are the wax-berries growing beside our open door. It is afternoon, and the scents and sounds of sum-

*Agnes Maule Machar.

mer are floating in. There is nothing, outside one shadowy room, that suggests death or grief; but there my mother stands, and looks and weeps. Or, on another day, I lift a corner of the window blind, which has been dropped by a timid girl to hide a funeral procession that is passing. I know whose form lies in the darked coffin, covered with its pall, which is being borne upon the shoulders of marching men, to that place of the leaning mossy stone and the blossoming wild brier. It is the woman of the fair face, and the flowing, ringleted hair, who had borne me in her arms, or carried me, as she has now to be carried, upon the shoulder. It is my father's sister, denied the fullness of her years, parted from her husband and infant daughter. It is now the twilight of an autumnal day, when I enter the home where dwelt my grandparents, to see an aged woman bowed before the kitchen fire-place, her face hidden in her hands, her body swaying in the tempest of her passionate grief. "O, Grammy!" I cry, "have you burned yourself?" She gathers me to her bosom, and weeps over me. Alas! her own brave boy is buried!

"His heavy-shotted hammock-shroud
Drops in his vast and wandering grave."

VI.

"O, Addie! she kissed me! I stooped, just now, and put my lips to hers, and she kissed me!" This was the passionate averment of poor Fred, an hour after his Mary closed her eyes. Was this fantasy, or did her gentle spirit hover upon those cold lips to give him once more the accustomed greeting? Fred and Mary! so close together in life; in death they lie, by the breadth of a continent, apart. She, beside her father, in the little dell of the cemetery at St. Andrews, whose highest part looks over Kettie's Cove. The whispering fir-tree sentinels her grave. He, near the banks of the Fraser, surrounded by the hills and forests of British Columbia. We, who dwelt with them, and knew and loved them,—we wander forward a little farther:

"We have far to go:
Bend to your paddles, comrades: see, the light
Ebbs off apace; we must not linger so.
Aye, thus it is! Heaven gleams and then is gone:
Once, twice, it smiles, and still we wander on."*

*Archibald Lampman.

VII.

We go sliddering along over the glary ice, our sleigh sliding from side to side of the hill-road, till, suddenly, we turn a corner of the little hamlet, and come to the door of a fisherman's cottage, in the neighborhood and presence of the sea. There stands the hearse, and there are clustered teams and people. The small rooms of the little tenement are already inconveniently full. The ceremonial of viewing the remains is accomplished with difficulty. I make my way in, as best I may, followed by my companion, who is to join me in the singing of funeral hymns, which should be "sweet and low," tremulous and tender, softly rendered. There is a hush, broken only by sobs, as the burial service is read, and the funeral hymns are chanted. Now, it is a song of one who is

> "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep
> From which none ever wakes to weep."

Now, it is the strain of some bruised one, kneeling at the threshold of the Eternal Mercy; and, again, it is a pæan of joyous greeting in that land where partings are not, and where

good-byes are never uttered. Then came the leave-taking. It was a plain woman, past the noon of life, whose face was disclosed; but a woman beloved, for whom there were tears to be shed. There is, among these fisher-folk of simple feelings and habits, a primitive abandon to their tides of feeling, and often in cases like this, a pathetic freedom of utterance. A granddaughter hovering over the quiet sleeper, sobbed, and cried, — "O, Grammy! I shall miss you so! Not to see you in the house any more, or to wave my hand to you as I go past!" For this, living in a neighboring house, she had been in the habit of doing. And the old man, the husband of her who had departed, bowed over the beloved, familiar face, and, gazing long and fondly, sadly said: "Farewell, my good companion for over fifty years. You 've left me at last, and I shall have to miss you. But if you still live, and have need, may there be a kind hand to shield you in that home where, they say, there will be One to take us in." For here, I listen to the sorrowful complaint of that soul to whom the assuring promise of Him who said, "I am the resurrection and the life," has but a doubtful note of comfort. Jesus would have need of saying

to him, as to Martha and Mary of Bethany, "Believest thou this?" Then the procession is formed, and we move to the grave, bough-buried, green, like our yet unfading memory, or the fantasies and attributes of our affection,—

"With which, like flowers that mock the corse beneath,
We *still* adorn and hide the *darkening* bulk of death." *

VIII.

The dying of a poet should itself be a poem! It was such when Tennyson went. A lyric, deep-hearted as his "Break, break, break," or as sweetly solemn, at curfew-time, as his "Crossing the Bar." Spenser's burial was a poem. For a spray of laurel or yew, each poet threw an elegy into the open grave. These were not lost: think of the poesy inspired by the "Faery Queen!" Chatterton and Poe added to death the awful grace of tragedy.

Alas! the gentler grace is lost in the memory of "mighty poets in their misery dead," as, on that morning, when his garret-chamber was broken open, and there lay the inanimate

*Shelley, "Adonais."

form of "the marvelous boy, the sleepless soul that perished in his pride," who had taken arsenic mixed with water, two nights before. Yes, there he lay,—who had taken destiny into his own hand, when

> "Black despair,
> The shadow of a starless night was thrown
> Over the earth in which he moved alone,—"*

surrounded by his torn manuscript poems. They gathered up the bits of melancholy paper, and went and buried him in the potter's field. The possibility of a splendid career, in a moment of suicidal madness, was ended!

> "Cut was the branch that might have grown full straight,
> And burned was Apollo's laurel bough."†

Saith Sir Thomas Browne: "I have so abject a conceit of this common way of existence, this retaining to the sun and elements, I can not think this to be a man, or to live according to the dignity of humanity. In expectation of a better, I can with patience embrace this life, yet in my best meditations do oft desire death. I honor any man that con-

*Shelley. †Marlowe's "Faustus."

temns it, nor can I highly love any that is afraid of it." Yet, as little to be honored, we think, is the pride that is greater than faith and fortitude, and that desperate rushing on death of those who have not the courage to live; for the same writer observes: "It is a brave act of valor to contemn death; but where life is more terrible than death, it is then the truest valor to dare to live; and herein religion hath taught us a noble example. For all the valiant acts of Curtius, Sczvola, or Codrus, do not parallel or match that one of Job; and sure there is no torture to the rack of disease, nor any poniards in death itself, like those in the way of prologue to it. *E mori nolo, sed me esse mortuum nihil curo.* I would not die, but care not to be dead."*

Kings and queens, whose lives have been like soilure to their robes, and like rust to their crowns, have by their passing added to the grace of death. Scarcely a Stuart (ill-fated race!) who did not strike us with the dread of life—as if a serpent's beauty and malignity were hidden there; scarcely one who did not charm us with the beauty or heroism of death, from Mary, who fell at Foth-

*Religio Medici.

eringay, to James, who closed his eyes breathing faint thanks to his hospitable brother-monarch at St. Germain. We all know how the first Charles demeaned himself that cruel day, when, in front of Whitehall, he met the headsman; where Bishop Juxon ministered comfort, and the king, who had laid down his pride, meekly received it, and said: "I go from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown, where no disturbance can be." No Cromwell could have done more nobly; and the lord protector was too lumberingly gloomy for an equal grace. As for the second Charles, no crown could be so corruptible as his morals. One is not surprised when heroes make death easy, as Montrose, or my Lord Russell, with whom the bitterness of death was past, so soon as he had taken leave of that more than royal lady, his wife and secretary. But who may not hope to "die well," when even a single beam of gentle radiance fell upon the forlorn parting of that poor butterfly, who once, while the Dutch fleet crept up the Thames, chased his brother moth through the parlors of my Lady Castlemaine!

How pathetically polite, this Charles, with his French education and wonderful manners!

The Queen was too much agitated to come to him. In her distress she asks the dying king, by the lips of my Lord Halifax, to excuse and pardon her. "Poor woman," he murmured, "I ask hers with all my heart!" And perhaps he had need to. Then, when the painful scene was protracted, the king requested them to draw the curtain and admit once more to his fading sight the light of the sun, saying: "I beg your pardon for giving you so much trouble; I am a very long time dying!" Alas! poor king! why should not one wish to wear the thorny jewels of his crown a little longer? You, perhaps, not so much "to dumb forgetfulness a prey," as others of your species, who have resigned "this cheerful, anxious being," can not be expected to go without reluctance, seeing that your treasure is here,—

"Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind."

Does love add to the grace of death? Then must it add to the awe and pain thereof. This feeling comes over us as we learn of the grief of William for his Queen Mary; which is unequaled for pathos, unless that of Victoria for Albert, her consort, can equal it. When William was dead, there was found over his heart, in a little silk bag, the wedding-ring

he had drawn from Mary's dying-hand, and a lock of her precious hair. To kings, as well as to peasants, "it is a fearful thing to love what death may touch." *

The poets, for their songs, have borrowed something of the grace of death; from the lays of him who sang the woes of Troy, to him who made death beautiful in the eyes of Evangeline, while she lifted them up in tears, and said, "Father, I thank thee!" What a radiance did Henry Vaughan behold amid the glooms of death!

"And yet as angels in some brighter dreams
Call to the soul when man doth sleep,
So some strange thoughts transcend our wonted themes,
And into glory peep."

With what delicacy, with what more than woman's tenderness, could Hood realize to us the passing of a beautiful woman! What need to quote it, and yet what may be quoted more fitly!

"We watched her breathing through the night,
Her breathing soft and low,
As in her breast the wave of life
Kept heaving to and fro.

* Felicia Hemans.

So silently we seemed to speak,
So slowly moved about,
As we had lent her half our powers
To eke her living out.

Our very hopes belied our fears,
Our fears our hopes belied—
We thought her dying when she slept,
And sleeping when she died.

For when the morn came dim and sad,
And chill with early showers,
Her quiet eyelids closed—she had
Another morn than ours."

When we read these verses, there comes straightway to memory little Eva, Mrs. Stowe's delightful child, and those subtly exquisite creations, Nell and Paul Dombey.

The tender, brooding eyes of Charles Dickens have marked the grace of death, and his pencil drew what aspects are most beautiful. Israfil, through him, becomes the gentlest of familiars,—the most benevolent of the angel-kind, who serve our race,—whose hand and foot, in our solemn chambers, become softer than those of womankind. Suffer him, ye ages, still to bespeak "the last of life for which the first was made!" Sweet, pathetic, radiant Nell! When can we forget thee, or lose

the sense thou givest us, as we see thee,—lying there, where thy poet has placed thee,—the exquisite sense of how gainful, how beautiful a thing it may be to die ? And that "eternal child"—little Paul Dombey! What say the wild waves, sister, of that uncharted, unsounded sea, toward which our little river of Time is bearing us? The light of the sinking sun, striking "through the rustling blinds," still quivers "on the wall like golden water;" but he has seen a brighter, gladder vision on that farther shore,—has gone to meet her who is that vision, and save for a sister's sob, there is solitude and silence now about him:

"Mamma is like you, Floy. I know her by the face! But tell them that the print upon the stairs at school is not divine enough. The light about the head is shining on me as 'I go!'

"The Grace of Death."

"The golden ripple on the wall came back again, and nothing else stirred in the room. The old, old fashion! The fashion that came in with our first garments, and will last unchanged until our race has run its course, and the wide firmament is rolled up as a scroll. The old, old fashion—Death!

"O, thank God, all ye who see it, for that older fashion yet, of immortality! And look upon us, angels of young children, with regards not quite estranged, when the swift river bears us to the ocean!"

IX.

Not only Hood, but the German poet, Uhland, has touched death with ineffable grace and tenderness, and charmed its sadness and silence with ethereal light and music. Some maid or matron, some celestial child, goes out with the tide divinely in three or four calm and perfect stanzas. This is Uhland's little jewel of celestial light, which sparkles in the beam of a smile, though tears are there. Let the voice of the reader be "low and sweet," and, like these words, full of a supernal wonder:

"What sounds so sweet awake me?
What fills me with delight?
O mother, look! who sings thus
So sweetly through the night?

I hear not, child, I see not;
O, sleep thou softly on;
Comes now to serenade thee,
Thou poor, sick maiden, none!

It is not earthly music
That fills me with delight;
I hear the angels call me:
O, mother, dear, good-night!"

X.

The grace of death! It is seen on Zutphen's field, where that mirror of Christian chivalry passed on the cup of cold water, with the immortal phrase of self-renunciation,—"Thy necessity is greater than mine." I marvel not that Lord Brooke instructed that these words should be put for his epitaph: *"Here lies the friend of Sir Philip Sidney."* It is heard in the *"Ay, ay, sir!"* of John Maynard, as he stood at his post of duty as wheelsman, and shriveled in the fire of the burning steamer. It is seen in that upper chamber where the Apostle of Methodism lifts up his hands in benediction, as he gathers up his feet in death, and exclaims to the generations following,—"The best of all is, God is with us!" The grace of death! See it in Tennyson's serene, pale face, lying on its pillow in the moonlit room at Aldworth, while his hand rests on the page of that grand world-poet he courted till the last! Behold it in Elizabeth Browning's ecstatic de-

parture from Casa Guida, and the arms of her sorrowing poet—the husband for whom years before, she had, as her heart demanded, left all others. Behold it in that chamber at Abbotsford, with the open window, and the sound of the silver Tweed upon his pebbles; when the kneeling son of the great Magician closed the eyes that had looked on the world in gladness and in sorrow, and had seen the marvels of their time. These names are but chosen from those of the great multitude who illustrate the grace of death.

XI.

That charming old English writer, Sir Thomas Browne, whose moralizings on our common morality, are among the most precious of the relics of our English tongue, says of sleep: "It is that death by which we may be literally said to die daily; a death which Adam died before his mortality; a death whereby we live a middle and moderating point between life and death; in fine, so like death, I dare not trust it without my prayers, and a half adieu unto the world, and take my farewell in a colloquy with God.

. . . . . .

"'Sleep is a death; O make me try,
By sleeping what it is to die;
And as gently lay my head
On my grave, as now my bed.
Howe'er I rest, great God, let me
Awake again at least with thee.
And thus assured, behold I lie,
Securely, or to wake or die.
These are my drowsy days; in vain
I now do wake to sleep again:
O come that hour, when I shall never
Sleep again, but wake forever.'

"This is the dormitive. I take to bedward: I need no other laudanum than this to make me sleep: after which I close mine eyes in security, content to take my leave of the sun and sleep unto the resurrection." *

But who lendeth death such a grace that all the poets laud his reign with sweet, sad elegies? Was it not the lonely treader of the wine-press, who was dumb in the hands of the slayer, but whose eloquent lips shattered the bars of the sepulcher? Even that suffering Child of Nazareth, concerning whom the Frenchman exclaimed: "Socrates died like a philosopher, but Jesus Christ like a God." He lends death grace, and he follows death with glory.

* Religio Medici

XII.

To our eyes the land of the sun has grown dimmer; the orange and myrtle have paled into gloom. I can see no longer the almond and olive; no more comes the spicy scent of the eucalyptus; the laurel-tree and the graceful pepper charm us no more. There rises a mist from the sea that has hidden the fir-grove; and evening comes fast upon me, laden with tears.

Our sister is gone! The child of the East and the West*—our singer has departed; a soft and gentle star has set in the Pacific wave. The harp she hung in the twilight breeze is silent forever; the light out of the friendly window is taken away. No smiling face looks forth at morning; no salutation is waved from the door.

We hear her music in the purl of woodland brooks; in the wordless chime of sea wave, and mountain torrent; in the thrush's aerial bell, tolled in the cedar-vale. We see her aspiring beauty in the star, and in the curve of the rainbow; we see her tranquil and shining spirit in the sheen of a sunset sea.

* Frances Laughton Mace, born at Orono, Maine, January 15, 1836, and died at Los Gatos, California, July 20, 1899.

Toll her a joyful knell, ye Bangor bells! Toll her a funeral glee, ye bells of Los Angeles! Our sister is liberated. No longer she looks to the mountains, whose gateways open toward her loved Norombega; no more her homesick heart shall pine; no longer she sits in the invalid's chair. From the West to the East nevermore a message, nor tender thought from the East to the West again: only from the common sky the dream of a white-waved hand.

Yet the land of Orono can not forget her singer, though the stately muse tread her native fields no more. Thou, Piscataquis, chattering over thy pebbles, and down thy water-breaks, wilt not forget her; thou, Black Cap, wilt rear thy maple beacons for her! Castine, and ye Desert Isle, her name is written upon you! Penobscot breathes a sigh in his reeds, from his sandy reaches, and from all his steepy shores! Katahdin utters a moan; Kineo lets fall a tear; while far in the South the palm-tree murmurs, in echo, of the Northern pine-tree's lamentation.

They of her own land are saying: "Where, with Israfil, has gone our white-hearted? Where is she who sang of Kinalo? Where is our exile on the Western mountains?

Where is she who, the homesick, wearisome day, was 'only waiting' for the glimmer of the sunset? She is gone! Our singer of the sweet voice sings to us no more; our daughter of the beautiful word has departed!"

XIII.

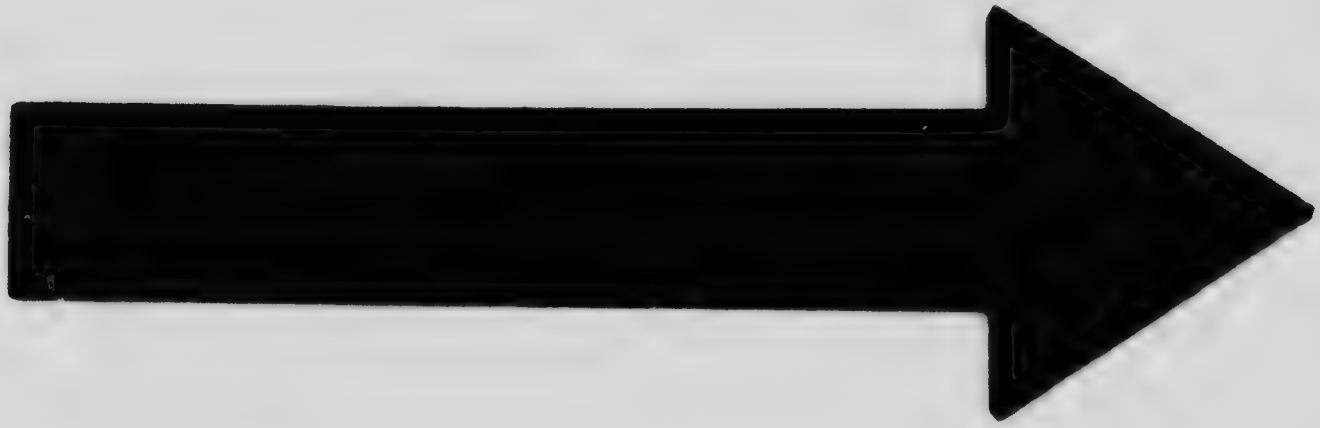
"Rest thee, blest spirit!
Still'd on death's river the turbulent foam:
Thou hast arrived at thy permanent home;
Thou dost inherit
The house whose foundation securely is laid;
Thy scope
Is yon cope,—
The azure, the infinite dome.

Rest thee, blest spirit!
Thy brow hath the garland of merit;
Thy song is the song of salvation!
Thou seest thy Savior, thou markest the wounds.
O his love and his passion,—and, hark! there resounds,—
Hosanna! Hosanna!
From tongues of a glorified nation!

Rest thee, blest spirit!
Sadness and sorrow can never invade
The heart's habitation;
No mornings that break
Shall have power to wake

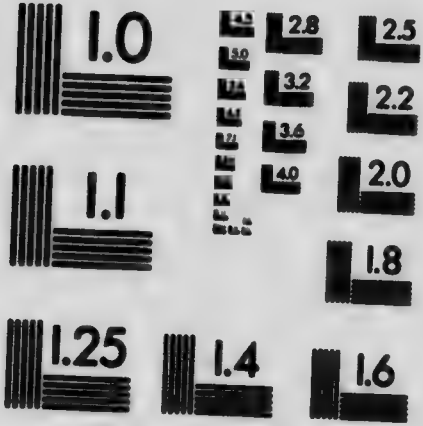
The trance whose glad rapture hath blessed
thee;
The peace
Ne'er shall cease
That thy heart doth pervade,—
That with its soft hand hath caressed thee;
And thy heart hath forgotten to ache.

With the antheming throng
Thou takest thy place;
With God's light on thy face,
Thou joinest the song,
And the garment of white doth invest thee.
Rest thee!
Rest thee!
Rest!
No tears, no woes, no night!
Pure, beautiful soul, thou hast found thy
delight,—
Enter thy rest!"



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)





APPLIED IMAGE Inc

1653 East Main Street
Rochester, New York 14609 USA
(716) 482 - 0300 - Phone
(716) 288 - 5989 - Fax

Wave-Songs.

I.

"Who hath desired the Sea—the immense and contemptuous surges?
The shudder, the stumble, the swerve ere the star-stabbing bowsprit emerges—
The orderly clouds of the trade and the ridged roaring sapphires thereunder—
Unheralded cliff-lurking flaws and the headsails low-volleying thunder?
His sea in no wonder the same—his sea and the same in each wonder.
His sea that his being fulfills?
—Rudyard Kipling.

"O strange, sublime, illimitable Sea,
. . . . . .
Thy thunders are Time's passing bell, and toll
The knell of all that has been, is, and is to be."
—George Frederick Scott.

"This great and wide sea."

To PITCH your summer tent under the oaks of Pemaquid, to face the shore and the sea from their shelter when the sun is declining, and to hear the waves' soothing murmur,

with the no less somnolent rustle of the leaves overhead,—this is a vernal luxury, the perfection of the vacationist's pleasure; the very honey of the year, too seldom tasted. If a little wind will blow, the plashing volumes of green make a laughing mockery of the sea; or the "balsam pines, æolian," scattered here and there throughout the grove, purr their soft sigh of contentment. In the hot and quiet afternoon they are censers, steaming with healing odors. The sunset hues and splendors are expunged from the white sea, to make way for the stars; then an eye of flame opens and shuts, flashes and fades, from the beacon tower of Monhegan.

II

This evening is a pearl in the cup of our enchantment, precious as that of Cleopatra. The ruby is also dropped there, like blood of the evening sky. The firmament and the mirror that holds it are like a benediction to jaded nerves and hearts of care. We rejoice in a sympathy so perfect, when the curling wavelets run into soft reconciliation with the sands, and the vapors fold all with one embrace as

they move in their pomp of gold, in raiment of crimson and purple. Fiery headlands catch a deeper glow where the sun descends upon them; the sands of yonder bar, on which the roller thrashes, have grown auriferous. So has the splendor taken that sail slanting yonder toward the horizon. There is a cheerful, auspicious, welcoming smile along all the far-away islands,—those dreamy shores where, perhaps, the sea-maidens throw above the wave their snowy necks, and leap and frolic till you catch the twinkling of their feet beneath. The surfy seas that run up on yonder near-hand promontory, we fancy a succession of white-maned horses swimming ashore. With a merry-go-lucky twinkle, a circling cloud of sand-pipers yonder are weaving their aerial web of beauty. Who would ask for blither sport than to watch them, with his gun forgotten, and the joy of their innocent pleasure in his heart? Here the crow and the gull neighbor, the fisherman has built his cottage, and earth and sea are mothers, who watch conjointly over their own. A little bareheaded girl, with shiny hair, runs yonder on the beach, and gathers the homely shells, which only children's and poets' eyes can see to be beau-

tiful. How like childhood these bewitching movements of the sea, with all its soft, reassuring voices! But there is a fascination in the great creature, whether of horror or of loveliness!

III.

With the briny breathing of the "wrinkled sea," that "crawls" beneath this cliff, with the soft shadows and changing lights of evening, come the poetic meanings and remembrances of this mighty being spread "great and wide" before me. I have exulted with its praisers. The stormy shade of Byron has been here, with his—"I have loved thee, Ocean!" Rossetti, with his mystical refinement of sentiment, has whispered in mind, with the low cadence of the wave:

"Consider the sea's listless chime:
Time's self it is, made audible,—
The murmur of the earth's own shell.
Secret continuance sublime
Is the sea's end. . . .

Listen alone beside the sea,
Listen alone among the woods;
Those voices of twin solitudes
Shall have one sound alike to thee."

I think, too, of one most winsome child of Apollo, whose eyes of wonder dwelt on nature, as on a great silver fining-pot, till he saw there dawning the clear face of Beauty; who painted pictures such as I can see while I lie here, couched among laurel, fern, and juniper, still gazing seaward:

"Old Ocean rolls a lengthened wave to shore,
Down whose green back the short-lived foam all hoar
Bursts gradual, with a wayward indolence."

And I have watched, in trance, with him, and with that "lone splendor hung aloft the night,"

"The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores."

From the time when he sang whose soul is deep and strong and resonant as Ocean, full of its own melody—"the Ionian father" of all the poets—this moving abode of things beautiful and terrible has been to them an unceasing inspiration. But, as says William E. Henley: "The ocean as confidant, a Laertes that can neither avoid his Hamlets nor bid them hold their peace, is a modern invention. [And shall

we believe him?] Byron and Shelley discovered it; Heine took it into his confidence, and told it the story of his loves; Wordsworth made it a moral influence; Browning loved it in his way, but his way was not often the poet's; to Matthew Arnold it was the voice of destiny, and its message was a message of despair; Hugo conferred with it as with a humble friend, and uttered such lofty things over it as are rarely heard upon the lips of man. . . . Lord Tennyson listens and looks until it strikes him out an undying note of passion, or yearning, or regret:

> "'Sunset and evening star,
> And one clear call for me.'

Mr. Swinburne maddens with the wind and the sounds and the scent of it until there passes into his verse a something of its vastness and its vehemency, the rapture of its inspiration, the palpitating, many-twinkling miracle of its light; Mrs. William Morris has been taken with the manner of its melancholy; while to Whitman it has been 'the great Camerado' indeed, for it gave him that song of the brown bird bereft of its mate, in whose absence the half of him had not been told to us. But to

Longfellow, alone, was it given to see that stately galley which Count Arnoldos saw; his only to hear the steersman singing that wild and wondrous song, which none that hears it can resist, and none that has heard it may forget. . . . To him the sea is a place of mariners and ships. In his verse the rigging creaks, the white sail fills and cackles, there are blown smells of pine and hemp and tar; you catch the home-wind on your cheeks; and old shipmen, their eyeballs white in their bronzed faces, with silver rings and gaudy handkerchiefs, come in and tell you moving stories of the immemorial, incommunicable deep. He abides in a port; he goes down to the docks, and loiters among the galiots and brigantines; he hears the melancholy song of the chanty-men; he sees the chips flying under the shipwright's adz, he smells the pitch that smokes and bubbles in the caldron. And straightway he falls to singing his variations on the ballad of Count Arnoldos; and the world listens, for its heart beats in his song."

It was his passion, surely, who made us see, as if of yesterday, the voyaging Ulysses; who caused our tears over the "repulsed," the

"sacred sire," whose woe was solaced, and whose heart was quieted by the "much-sounding sea," and without thought of whom we can not hear its "audible chime." It was his who lit to our fancy's eye the rippling pearl-fires—the "laughter of innumerable waves"—the "many-twinkling smile of ocean." He was no alien from its waves, who heard that heaving bell,

> "Over some wide-watered shore
> Swinging slow with sullen roar;"

and who scented the perfumed forests of Araby, that salute the voyager "beyond the cape" with their spicy odors, while—

> "Well pleased they slack their course, and many a league
> Cheer'd with the grateful smell, old Ocean smiles."

Even with the gusto of earlier bards will Browning sing,—

> "Over the seas our galleys went;"

and Tennyson, in the very spirit of the ancient Greek, puts forth his prow of song:

> "There lies the port; the vessel puffs her sail;
> There gloom the dark, broad seas. . . .
> The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks;

The long day wanes; the slow moon climbs; the deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my friends,
'T is not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for the purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die."

IV.

Winter darkens and makes dread the sea; the pallor of her snows makes fearful contrast with its sable waters. The icy ledges, licked by the spume of Kraken waves, and leaped upon by the pale horses of death and shipwreck, are terrific to the heart of the mariner. In the confusion of winds and waves the mightiest ships go down. But the earliest poets have rejoiced when the beautiful feet of the virgin spring come treading upon the shore. The Latin lyrist, looking out from Baiæ or Sorrento, may rejoice: "Now the bitter reign of winter is over; spring returns; softly upon us blows the Favonian wind. Now gleeful mariners draw down their dry keels to the sea; in the fields the lowing herds make

known their joy." The same delight breaks from the lips of the Greeks in the old Anthology; and, uttered with exquisite grace and feeling by bards so long vanished from the earth, we know the thrill that shook their hearts with the coming of the swallow, or the opening song, in some Attic vale of the newly-arrived nightingale. "Now, at her fruitful birth-tide, the fair, green field flowers out in blowing roses; now on the boughs of the colonnaded cypresses the cicala, mad with music, lulls the binder of sheaves; and the careful mother-swallow, having finished houses under the eaves, gives harborage to her brood in the mud-plastered cells; and the sea slumbers, with zephyr-wooing calm spread clear over the broad ship-tracks, not breaking in squalls on the stern-posts, not vomiting foam upon the beaches. O, sailor, burn by the altars the glittering round of a mullet, or a cuttle-fish, or a vocal scarus, to Priapus, ruler of ocean and giver of anchorage; and so go fearlessly on thy seafaring to the bounds of the Ionian Sea." Will it be with any rites like the ones the poet recommends our fishermen at morning, sailing out of Long Cove to cast their lines for cod?

I trow not; we are otherwise religious, or superstitious, but the charms of sea and shore, and of returning spring, are the same to us. So we sing the song was sung of old: "Me, Pan, the fisherman, placed upon this holy cliff, —Pan of the seashore, the watcher here over the fair anchorages of the harbor; and I take care now of the baskets and of the trawlers off this shore. But sail, thou, by, O, stranger, and in requital of this good service of theirs, I will send behind thee a gentle south wind."

V.

"I was a lonely youth on desert shores.
My sports were lonely." —Keats.

I, too, love the sight, the sound, of the "green-girdled mother," and, coming near her from my inland home, like the ancients on their approach, I also feel my heart leaping up within me, and am fain to cry: "Thalassa! Thalassa! All hail to thee, thou eternal! all hail to thee! A thousand times from my jubilant heart I greet thee!" For, though I was not born upon her bosom, I have been with the mighty mother from my childhood.

"All my boyhood, from far vernal
Bournes of being, came to me
Dreamlike, plangent, and eternal
Memories of the plunging sea."

And so, with Carman, I can say:

"All my heart is in its verges,
And the sea-wind is my home."

I am a sailor's son, and am brother of one who met a sailor's common fate. I have dreamed and brooded over sea's charms and mysteries so long it has become like an old, old story to hear the murmur of its waves. Now it has attracted, and now revolted, me. I have exulted again and again, in the very spirit of Byron's apostrophe, and in the passion of the young Renfrew bard;* for my love has been like theirs, and though my home has been upon the shore, and among the hills, where I have been too long confined, yet has my fancy gone abroad over the waves, and my ear was early attuned to their musical speech. "Like the language of home, their accents whisper to me. Like the dreams of my childhood, I see the sun's glimmer over the billowy realm of waves, and they repeat to me anew olden memories."†

*Robert Pollok. †Heine.

VI.

The deep-souled man, to whom the sea is a familiar, looks for it, longs for it, loves it. He delights to watch and note

> "Crisp foam-flakes scud along the level sand,
> Torn from the fringe of spray."

Delightful to his ear, amid "continuous roars," the

> "Sea-mew's plaintive cry
> Plaining discrepant between sea and sky."

The civilized man, knowing, sentient, high-keyed, desires the ocean breaking at his feet; but to the savage, estranged, barbaric, it may be an object of terror.

How the Greeks, in the army—of that "Ten Thousand" Xenophon tells us about—exulted when, to their eyes, "the many-twinkling smile of ocean," that had cheered their childhood, was restored! Yet imagine the dismay—a dismay as genuine and natural as this delight—with which the barbaric mind must survey so majestic an object, never seen before.

Out from the deep on deep of an African forest came the dark-faced men, who bore the

half-unconscious Livingstone, and gazed with mingled awe and terror on that unknown to them, we call the sea. They knelt or fell prostrate in their alarm before their master, and, looking toward what must have seemed a dreadful deity, exclaimed: *"The world says, 'I am finished; there is no more of me!'"*

VII.

"The mountains look on Marathon—
And Marathon looks on the sea."

But did ever mountains look on men more worthy of them? And did ever the sea welcome to her bosom the sons of a nobler race than they who, "on that morn to distant glory dear," devoted themselves to death for the sake of freedom, and for the deliverance of that dear land they loved, and which was worthy of their love? The scene is imperishable from history and song. Still we behold—

"The flying Mede, his shaftless broken bow;
The fiery Greek, his red pursuing spear;
Mountains above, Earth's, Ocean's plain below;
Death in the front, Destruction in the rear."

The elements themselves shall bear witness to noble men. We call a few by name—Miltiades—Leonidas—and that majestic poet, who "fought at Marathon,"*—but the universe is conscious of them all. The pines and the winds of the mountains that saw them shall proudly whisper their names and their lineage; and the sea that waited as their faithful ally, shall lift up its voice to proclaim that they were heroes.

"We crave not a memorial stone
For those who fell at Marathon.
Their fame with every breeze is blent;
The mountains are their monument,
And the low plaining of the sea
Their everlasting threnody."

VIII.

Come downward to the shore, and yet thou shalt travel in the train of Sorrow; she embarks, and takes her way seaward, and Grief walks upon the swelling waves, as did he who is her Consoler. The waves and the winds unite in lamentation, and the concord of breaking billows around the prow at night brings

*Æschylus.

the communion of sadness to many a waking soul. A tempest joins in the lonely procession—even its diapason is in fitting unison; clouds and storms, more than tranquil, and sunny skies, may befit funeral seasons, and April snows may be the hopeful covering of a grave.

IX.

They sat upon the deck, looking behind them, or forward, with wistful eyes, while the ship steamed outward from the harbor, past bell-buoy, lighthouse, and the last dark island, into the open sea. Brothers, companions, envoys to the frontier of the land whence no traveler returns, ministrants at the altar of filial duty and affection, in the last sorrowful rite and office. They set themselves to breast a great and sharp wind blowing from a sea they had yet to cross. In the hold beneath them rested a sacred ark, containing relics precious as those that, with lamentation, Joseph bore out of Egypt, a casket upon which was written the hallowed name of *Mother*. Folded forever were the hands that had caressed, the arms that had enfolded them; closed for-

ever the eyes that had looked upon them with a kindness that is not of earth; cold and silent the lips that had spoken to them in the language of solicitude and tenderness. To her last resting-place they bore all that now remained of her they loved and revered. In life or in death "a mother is a mother still," the holiest gift that a generous God bestows—save that one "unspeakable Gift," for which we should all adore him.

Silent they sat, and watched the evening's dying splendor. As often before, they

> "Saw the sun retire
> And burn the threshold of the night."

The city they had left had melted into a golden mist; night came down gradually with her dusky embraces, and the sea rose up to receive them. They were traveling on into the midst of the giant storm, that had hung its gonfalons of peril over them before the "ocean lane of fire" had faded from the deep; and from midnight until morning their ship plunged on, sounding a knell and blindly feeling a "dim and perilous way." Then they wondered if the narrow cell in which they vainly sought to sleep, wet with spray and dripping rain, was

destined to become their tomb; and whether the sweet manes, they would have left beside that other hallowed dust on the hillside, should be reft from its last cradle by ocean monsters, and

"Toss with tangle and with shells."

But, no! there came the dawning, and there loomed the hither shore, bleak with the sudden snows of a returning winter. Never more filled with gloom seemed sky and wave; never more forbidding and inhospitable seemed that dear Acadian shore. But grateful had they felt had the coast been like Greenland or Unalaska: after all it was the margin of their own land; before them was the iron road into that country soon to be filled again with the scent of apple-blossoms; the dear mother's dust should repose safely in the destined place, and they, delivered from the perils of the deep, might drop a filial tear at the reading of the burial service.

. . . Farewell, thou good mother! who didst dwell among thy children, wi uch late joy of life, amid all thy sorrows; w. the reed of thy life broken before it was bruised in all its parts. We remember thy frame unbent, thy

mind undimmed, thy heart unjaded. Thou leavest the spell of gentleness and bravery behind thee. Thy tomb, as thy home was long since, be fragrant of love. Thou art seasonably ushered to thy peaceful chamber in that abode of rest. We did not watch thy mournful decaying—an ill that never came to thee. We rejoice that from this region of plaints and agonies—greatly as we miss thee—thou art so quietly and sweetly withdrawn.

"Thou, as a gallant bark from Albion's coast
(The storms all weather'd and the ocean cross'd)
Shoots into port at some well-haven'd isle,
Where spices breathe, and brighter seasons smile,
There sits quiescent on the floods, that show
Her beauteous form reflected clear below,
While airs impregnated with incense play
Around her, fanning light her streamers gay,—
So thou, with sails how swift! hast reach'd the shore,
'Where tempests never beat nor billows roar;'
And thy loved consort on the dangerous tide
Of life long since has anchor'd by thy side.
But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,
Always from port withheld, always distress'd,—
Me howling blasts drive devious, tempest-toss'd,
Sails ripp'd, seams opening wide, and compass lost,
And day by day some current's thwarting force
Sends me more distant from a prosperous course.
But, O, the thought that thou art safe, and he!
That thought is joy, arrive what may to me."

X.

"The sea! the sea! the open sea!"

There is indeed a wideness like the love of the Infinite! But there is not room on my scant page for a record of all its memories. Over its surf and curling waves, along the edge of his isle Ariel glides; and there Prospero is magician, seer, and lord. There Æneas goes adventuring, as well as the restless Ulysses; there go the Argonauts, and there Arion—fortunate musician!—sits on the back of his dolphin. There into the blackness of midnight waters falls Cowper's poor "Castaway," from Anson's flying ship; and there

"At the dead of night, by Lonna's steep
The seaman's cry was heard along the deep;"

while the Palemons and Alberts of such shipwrecks as that of Falconer will haunt the surfy rocks on alien coasts forever. There the Bruce goes sailing about Staffa and the margins of Lorn; and there Enoch Arden sits lonely as Selkirk, on his South Pacific isle, and hears

"The myriad shriek of wheeling ocean fowl,
The league-long roller thundering on the reef."

XI.

"In a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither;
Can in a moment travel thither,—
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore."
—Wordsworth.

"Religious, holy sea."
—Pollok.

O thou great and wide sea! Mine eye is never sated with gazing upon thee; mine ear is never wearied with thy music. Thou purgest my thought, and createst my dreams anew; thou dost exalt my spirit to the Infinite and Invisible, whose creature thou art! Bid the babbling world to go far from me, and bring around me the Ancients of Days; tell me of the greatness of Being! Sing thy song of Eternity! Smite thy cymbal waves afar; shout thy raptures, and chant thy dirges! Interpreter of our hearts; murmurer of love and of sorrow; winding-sheet of our dead; beautiful reflector of the heavens; speak to us still in the deepest language of our souls! Our eyes shall grow dim, and our ears dull; the mortal senses thou canst charm shall be obliterated;

but the world shall feel the washing of thy waves, shall "hear thy mighty waters rolling evermore!" Evermore? Evermore!

". . . Until shall ring
That Voice above thy vast abyss."

For thou, majestic and mysterious thing! art transient, too; and at the bidding of Him—who casteth out over thee the measuring-rod of his own eternity and discovereth thine end, who did summon out of the past thy flowing tides,—thou shalt retire and uncover thy gulfs and abysses; dissolved into vapor by the fierce breath of universal fire, *"there shall be no more sea!"*

XII.

ALONG SHORE.

(An Epistle.)*

I.

Once more, in amicable shade reposed,
I greet you, brothers, from this realm of song;
Content that Labor's clangorous gate has closed,
And ope'd the port of Rest, delay'd so long.
Here (where that mighty songsmith, the hoar Sea,
Beats on his sounding anvil by the shore,

*To Charles H. Collins and Henry W. Hope, Paint, Ohio.

And wind and wave, in sweet fraternity,
Make the same music that I heard of yore),
I dream again of your far inland vale,
With all its waters shining cliff-inbound;
I see your viney rocks,—the heavens they scale,
While to your pipes' clear note their caves resound.
There you, to whom the frequent thought will fly,
Make in such pleasaunce your accustom'd cheer:
For you boon Nature, and the open sky—
Ancient companions, that await me here.

II.

This oak-crown'd hill o'erlooks the sheeny brine,
The site of summer homes, whence I behold
Below, in thund'rous throes of life divine,
That restless, glorious creature, never old!
A little nest within the hill there is
Circled with piney groves, whence voices ring
Of children, sporting in Arcadian bliss,
Where tense lutes tremble and glad maidens sing.
Below, a furzy path skirts the grim walls
Swept by the shrewd salt gale: there craggy knees
Whiten, where oft the foamy billow falls
With rhythmic roll and thunder of the seas.
There lies outstretch'd the monstrous fire-fused stone
O'er which the spray is flung, the green wave roll'd;
Like pediment and plinth and column prone,
Mold'ring upon the waste of Tadmor old.
Beyond, the scatter'd isles, the coast-lights, stand;
The tide-heaved bell, that tolls to make aware
Of threat'ning reefs and breakers near the land,
By night the hapless mariner's despair.

III.

Old Ocean! Nay! 't is ocean, ever young!
Horror and beauty written in his face!
Ha! now I watch yon "snaky wave upflung"
To clasp me in its treacherous embrace!
Gorgon! with head uplift and "hissing tongue,"
And foamy fire upon thy awful mane!
Of mine—of mine, how many hast thou slain?
Thou hast the tender maiden, and the brave
Adventurous boy, from gentle bosom sprung;
And thou hast lost them in thy "v. ndering grave."
Careless art thou of woman's peer. ss bloom,
Or the high hope of manhood, fall'n so low:
Yet, Earth knows Death, and yields th' untimely tomb:
We can not blame thee, Sea, that thou doest so!

IV.

The fern, the laurel, and sweet-scented bay
Neighbor the rugged rock and sounding surge;
The spreading juniper, with green o'erlay,
Hangs its pale berries on the granite verge.
Beneath, the weed, whose tangled fibers tell
Of some inviolate deep-sea shrine, I see;
There lies the faultless, "secret chamber'd shell,"
Whose sound is ocean's vast epitome;—
The utterance of that voice still moveth so
The soul of him who listens; the unspent
Majestic movement, grand, and strong, and slow;
Infinity, with passion eloquent!

V.

By day the sun, by night the moon, doth shine,
And lay their beams auriferous from this shore
Across "great twinkling wastes." O'er gem-lit brine
Fly the white gulls, that "wheel, and swerve," and soar,
Moving "in unanimity divine,"
With necks down-droop'd and bent upon the deep.
I watch their undulations serpentine,—
Like dreaming creatures flying in their sleep.
Now, with their "wondrous consentaneous curve,"
They flash afar, in "sudden silver sheen;"
Beyond the isles and headlands now they swerve—
A beauteous vision, seen, and now unseen.

VI.

O sacred shore! Retirement's favorite haunt,
When the hot city sends its votary forth,
To lie where peace and dream have use and wont;
Where of heart's ease we learn once more the worth.
The rustle of soft leaves; the gentle sigh
Of spirits lodged in turrets of the firs;
Blackbird and crow, in harsh garrulity,
With sweeter airs of piney choristers.
To lie in "world-forgotten coves," how sweet!
"Lapt in the magic of some old sea-dream,"
While rock and breaker with dull thunder meet,
And up the white-ridged sand the blue waves cream:

To clasp the "great, sweet mother," and drink deep
The salt airs shivering off the milk-white foam;
Up rocky stairways of the cliff to creep,
And gaze out o'er wild Fancy's boundless home;
Down sunless clefts toward caverns dim to peep,
Where the wave sucks and gurgles, where repose
The slimy weeds, and where the limpets sleep,
And winds are shrill and damp, when bleak the tempest blows.

VII.

To muse o'er sunken chambers of the deep,
Paven with sand and shell and gleaming gold:
Those hush'd "recesses of primeval sleep"
Some "immemorial spell" doth trancèd hold:
To watch yon "granite fangs eternally
Rending the blanch'd lips of the wrathful sea;"—
The high, courageous wave, still backward roll'd;
"The breaker, clutching land," then outward hurl'd—
Like ruin'd angel, sky-attempting, still—
"Back on its own tempest-tormented world."
O deep delight! the fresh'ning wave to share!
"The surges' mountainous upthunderings!"
Of Nature's cleansing-house the sweetness rare
Is mine; "the lovely, blithe, swift, debonair;
The joy, the glorious energy, of things!"
This is "Earth's ecstasy made visible!"
This is the passion that the Greek bards knew!
The universal pulse, the cosmic thrill,
The world-old rapture, ever fresh and ne !

VIII.

So, friends of mine, versed in such lovely lore;
Seeing, as if with your illumined eyes,
Hearing for you the tumbling breaker's roar,
Where screaming gulls in snowy clouds arise;
I send you salutation evermore!
I—watching the sun-litten, slanted sail,
And the long billow curving to the shore,—
Greet you, reposing in your haunted vale.
Nature and human hearts are one, though far
The scenes be sunder'd where her votaries lie;
Softly on each alike look sun and star,
For o'er us broods the same all-fostering sky.
—Arthur J. Lockhart ("Pastor Felix").

Autumnal Notes.

I.

The day becomes more solemn and serene
When noon is past; there is a harmony
In autumn, and a luster in its sky,
Which through the summer is not heard or seen,
As if it could not be, as if it had not been."

—Shelley.

"Leaf by golden leaf
Crumbles the gorgeous year."

—William Watson.

I AWOKE this morning, and autumn's most delicate wraith was already abroad. She is revealing herself by momentary, uncertain glimpses, and, here and there, she is beginning to lay

"A fiery finger on the leaves."

I think how soon she will be apparent in all her dominion of splendor. In these woods of Maine the silver birch will soon be shaking out all her light golden tresses, and the blush-

ful gleam of the blood-red maple will be seen from the midst of her piney compeers. Everywhere in this northern hemisphere nature will soon show her autumnal suit; Katahdin will stand in his September glory, with all the arms of the Penobscot wound around him, and all the sheeny lakes and the abounding forests known to the camper and sportsman. Over Winipisiogee and St. George, and on the margin of Champlain, it will be autumn; and about Sunnyside and Mount Vernon. Over that great blue expanse,—

"Mother and lover of men, the sea,—"

the autumnal sprite will be felt and visible. Yes, and far beyond! That land from which our fathers came will soon share the lustrous jewel of ripeness with us. Soon by Rydal Mount, where Wordsworth walked, muttering eternal verse, the yellow leaves will be falling,—golden patines from his favorite groves. The ghost of Scott may see them, what time the sun

"Flames o'er the hill from Ettrick shore,"

when it wanders through Dryburgh, where he lies entombed. They will quiver in the morning light, all dewy, about the homes and

haunts of Burns, and all along the "banks and braes of Bonnie Doon." But England, with all her wealth of form and color, and with all her classic memories, will not show, though you travel from Hawthornden to Westminster, anything like the varied beauties of our declining year. The season has a ripe, subdued, and mellow close, but not a majestic brilliancy, as on these shores. See! I will paint you a picture,—a fertile Midland scene, like those George Eliot delighted in, and drew so finely. Color it shall not lack, but the deeper tints are mostly brown and russet. Yet the scene is homelike and dear, and, through the eyes that saw and the hand that drew "Middlemarch," you seem to have lived there. Look at the fields, with their golden spikes of stubble! There run the somber-hued hedges in line between these sunny squares. Survey the fat fields, the upturned umber earth, rich with centuries of dressing, where late the plow has been run;—how they differ from our New England fields and the prairies of the West! And the meadows that stretch away, fading to an olive-green,—look at them! There rise the red-tiled roofs of cottages, with their white walls, and the bluish smoke, that so please the

eye, rising amid the trees. Now the oaks are changing; the beeches and poplars are smitten with gold, but a gold tawnier than ours. This is England—reserved, subdued, substantial; this is the rural splendor Thomson painted:

> "The fading many-colored woods,
> Shade deepening over shade, the country round,
> Imbrown; a crowded umbrage dark and dun,
> Of every hue from wan declining green
> To sooty dark."

This certainly is no proper description of an autumnal forest in America, where over every hill and vale the tints glow like sunset clouds. Bryant, Longfellow, Whittier, and their kin, can show us in words this "livery of the sky." Burns gives us the lighter tints on Scottish hills of autumnal foliage, in some of his incidental passages. Often, with enchanted vision, would he mark "the sun's departing beam look on the fading yellow woods."

II.

There is pure pleasure for him who will now walk in the woods when this hectic flush is on the cheek of nature. Nay, I almost repudiate that epithet! In a certain sense it may be used

poetically, but it is not strictly true. The ripening of the pear and peach is hardly hectic, nor is that of the leaf, even in appearance, till the frost has taken it. But we will allow that figment of description, if you choose, to the leaf of the maple. This is the time for picnics in the grove, and this is the season for sunny strolls in mid-September. It is good to go alone; it is sometimes good to have a companion; we often find it comfortable to have a pocket volume,—the right one.

But carry no gun with you, and be chary of hook and rod. Shame on him whose only familiarity with the wild creatures of the forest is when he pursues and slays them. We do not object to the hunt in poetry and romance, when Scott or Cooper will consent to sound the horn; but otherwise we have no heart to follow it. The light liver of Felix knows little about the matter, in fact. He never met the eyes of a doe, brim full of appealing innocence, with the tube of maliciousness pointed from his shoulder. Would he might take aim, instead of another; the creature must infallibly escape. He would not even go fishing to-day when invited; not but he would be willing to share his neighbor's

pottage. In winter he has seated himself by the lake-side, watching where lines were set in vaults for finny meddlers, till the little flag went up bespeaking a captive ready to surrender. He also remembers, without poignancy of regret, how once he harried the eels in Whiting River. But in later days, so far as he is concerned, perch and pickerel may swim unconscious of their safety. He was never a skillful or executive fisher, deficient of art and energy among masters of the angle,—void of allurement to catchers-on of any sort, not having the business in him. Not the less is he interested in all gentle fishers, from Wynken de Worde's fair nun, and the quaint Izaak, to the author of "Little Rivers;" "The Compleat Angler" being with him, as it has been with many another respectable non-angler, a *vade mecum*. There is a perfect understanding between himself and all animated nature that the individual members thereof are to take no alarm. The young pouters will even come and look curiously upon him, as if to say, "Why are you not inclined to catch me?" His philosophy is quite in harmony with his constitution; it is doubtless his defect that the hunters and fishers go without him, and have

this blast sent after them: "To hunt and to catch fish is barbarous; our race will yet look with abhorrence upon such diversions, as now we do upon the scalping of a maiden or the braining of an infant."

III.

A single pine-tree, standing on a hill between the villages of Corinth and East Corinth, Maine, and near the road along which I was accustomed to pass, became to me a point of attraction, and a center of musing during the years spent in that town,—and especially at the autumnal season. After my removal,—as memory would go back to my old sylvan companion, endeared by long association and congenial thought,—the lines here introduced were written:

THE LONELY PINE.

Remote, upon the sunset shrine
Of a green hill, a lonely pine
Beckons this hungry heart of mine.

"Draw near," it always seems to say,
Look thither whensoe'er I may
From the dull routine of my way.

"I hold for thee the heavens in trust;
My priestly branches toward thee thrust,
Absolve thy fret, assoil thy dust."

Yet when I come, it heeds not me;
The stars amid the branches see
But lonely man and lonely tree,—

And lonely earth, that holds in thrall
Her creatures; while eve gathers all
To fold within her shadowy wall.

In starry senate doth arise
The 'lumined spirit of the skies,
Walking with radiant ministries.

But, sighing from its kindred wood
Afar —its green-robed brotherhood—
The pine-tree feeds my wonted mood.

For, with its spell around me thrown,
Dreaming of social pleasures flown,
I grieve, yet joy, to be alone.

Yet in my lonely pine-tree dwells,
When 'mid its breast the soft wind swells,
A prophet of sweet oracles.

Like a faint sea on far-off shore,
With its low, muffled, elfin roar,
It speaks one language evermore;—

One language, unconstrain'd and free,
The converse of the answering sea,
The old rune of eternity.

Its fresh'ning music breatheth sooth
The uncorrupted dream of youth,
Restoreth Love, unveileth Truth.

It speaketh that felicity
Which, being not, we deem may be;
It centers hope in certainty.

So, stronger from this green hill shrine
I pass to cares and tasks of mine,
And, grateful, bless my healing pine.

IV.

And tell me, is there not a grandeur in the year's decay; is there not, indeed, splendor enough in its dying, after all this beauty of ripeness? Come! let us go, for autumn issues her own invitations, prized as the cards with which we enter our drawing-rooms. They are got out in colored lithographs. The spring-struck rhymer may always wish to see green leaves; but the lover of variety will still follow "autumn in her weeds of yellow and crimson." Summer fills the soul with languor, and shuts

up the fountains of feeling; but the first frost tightens and tingles every nerve, and awakens all the spirit of song. Come! let us away to the transfigured woods! See, where the forest lies flanked by wide, green fields, through which the limpid river goes roundingly, to catch its glories in reflection. Enter this primeval cathedral, and stand amid its golden lights. How its sky windows hang emblazoned! Farther on in the wood there is an open space, and a little lake lies to mirror all this enchantment in its bosom. It is a spot where sylvan beauty might stand to dress her locks. The worlds of dream, the fairy-lands of childhood, the Arabian palaces, grow tame and pale before this old domain—this flush of fairness. We say aloud,—

"O what a glory doth the year put on!"

Sit down on the mottled base of this noble beech, and open your Bryant:

"The mountains that infold
In their wide sweep the colored landscape round
Seem groups of giant kings, in purple and gold,
That guard th' enchanted ground.

I roam the woods that crown
The upland where the mingled splendors glow,
Where the gay company of trees look down
On the green fields below."

Turn the leaves over, and, while the smoky rill glimmers, and the chestnut patters down, and the leaves "fall like flakes of light to the ground," while "the maples redden in the sun," and

"Upon the grassy mold
The purple oak-leaf falls; the birchen bough
Drops its bright spoil like arrow-heads of gold,"

let us find a worthy accompaniment to the great anthem of the year in our good descriptive poet. Or, if you will listen to something humbler, here is a plaintive autumnal song from the Acadian minstrel, John McPherson:

At morn the dew-drench'd gossamers
Hang sparkling everywhere,
And richer robes the dusky firs
And royal maples wear;
O'er all the woods a rainbow sheen,
Enchanting to the eye,
Matches the rich relieving green
That vale and plain supply:
But these are withering, day by day,
Before the north wind's breath:
So this world's glory fades away,
So bright things bow to death.

A fitful sound of spectral wings
Is heard in all our bowers,—
It is the dirge the wild wind sings
Above the faded flowers;
As oft in gloom, 'mid beauty fled
And glory gone, it grieves,
Like Love beside the early dead,
Among the falling leaves.

Sweet now to wander by the lake,
Amid the forest hoar,
Whose silvery joyous waters make
Soft music on the shore;—
To mark, beneath the tranquil light,
The tall trees drooping low,
And pining o'er their mirror'd blight,
Like Beauty in her woe:
Sweet now to rove, with minstrel thought,
Amid the fair decay,
And mark the wondrous changes wrought
Around our pilgrim way;
And sweet, at holy hush of day,
To walk by murmuring rill,
And think of loved ones, far away,
The heart remembers still;
For soothing to the soul the tear
Wherewith affection grieves,
O'er feeling's beautiful past year,
Among her falling leaves.

And sweet, laborious summer past,
To take the earned repose
That toiling man enjoys at last
When autumn evenings close;—

The cheery hearth-fire, sparkling clear,
The kettle's simmering song,
The lov'd home faces clust'ring near,
When evening hours are long:
Sweet, after all our moil and care,
To hoard our little store,
And warmly breathe the grateful prayer
That Heaven rewards with more:
When round the harvest board we share
The boon of temperate joy,
May we not smile at all the care,
The trouble and annoy?
Yes, soft the pillow that we press,
When, 'mid our garnered sheaves,
We sink to sleep, and, dreaming, bless
The time of falling leaves.

V.

"The Queen Moon is on her throne,
Cluster'd round by all her starry fays."
—Keats.

The moon seems this evening to have borrowed half the glory and fervor of the sun, as we see her shining at the full between the arching elms of our street. The mass of leaves, here and there slightly colored, make a luxurious foil for her magnificence, where she sits in sultry state in the eastern dome of the firmament; while, in the opposite, play the hot and

restless flashes of some distant cloud. Summer, that lingered apart from us throughout its proper cycle of July and August, sits with hazy garment widely spread. So stifling an atmosphere as that of parlor or study sends us outside, where we may draw a cool and easy breath with something of satisfaction; and at eight o'clock we sit about the door, still gasping at the very memory of the day, while the children gambol on the bit of lawn we have bordered with sun-burned asters. It is good on this quiet air to hear their cheerful voices!

What a noble scheme seems this in the midst of which we sit! The whole creation seems to have taken on an extra burnish.

"Mamma, who makes it light, and who makes it dark?" This is the question of young Harold, who now plucks his mother's gown, lifting his eyes to hers.

"Why, it is God," she asseverates, with solemn assurance.

"Yes, I know it," he responds brightly, as pleased to be able to concur with her on so grave and grand a subject,—"'cause he has the *sheenery* to do it with."

"Look yonder to the horizon, and see that

Gorgon in the northwest wink his eye,—but be thankful he is not at hand to gaze at you." It is the family poet who volunteers so classic an allusion to the distant cloud, more somnific and ashen in its glum habitude than the fellow who frowned and blazed over us yesterday at sunset, while the grass grew greener, and glistened with a strange, magnetic luster.

"See! the Gorgon-cloud is winking again!" exclaims Grace, as the huge, gray creature grows luminous once more, its sullen bosom pulsating with lambent fire, while an angry fist seems lifted out of it, clutching bright arrows.

"Would that yonder cloud might drift round to us!" sighs pater-familias, drawing a deeper breath. "It is welcome to arrive before midnight. I think we may take the risk of any stray bolts for the sake of what our good sister P—— terms 'mercy-drops from mercy-clouds,' while you, good wife, would sleep all the sounder for the thunder."

We have seen enough of heat and dust today. It searched us, it clave unto us. Even dust, however, may become a beautiful thing when the sunset chooses it for a medium, as I saw it yesterday, while coming up street,—the Joy-giver sending me his parting blink

through the sylvan vista. Then the cloud was one of glory, and I was not involved therein, —which makes all the difference:

"Dear native town whose choking elms each year
With eddying dust before their time turn gray,
Pining for rain,—to me thy dust is dear;
It glorifies the eve of summer day,
And when the westering sun half sunken burns,
The mote-thick air to deepest orange turns,
The westward horseman rides through clouds of gold away." *

And these last are autumnal notes, for all their semblance of summer.

VI.

In August the camper is abroad, and many a white tent is spread by lake-shores in the Canadian wildernesses, and the wilds of Maine, about Moosehead and Katahdin. Some of my brethren are there, and I send after them the felicitation of song. But amid the heats of summer my heart obeys another summons: I accept the invitation of the sea,—the sound of whose waves is sweeter in my ears than the music of the mountain or the forest. But with the advent of glorious September; or, better

* Lowell, "An Indian Summer Reverie."

still, under the hunter's moon, when, with his rifle and his Indian guide, he plunges into delightful freedom,—then, ho! for the woods!

HUNTER'S SONG.

Ho! for the woods! Ho! for the woodmen's cheer!
The rod, the rifle, and the light canoe;
The swift pursuit of caribou and deer;
The flash of salmon from the liquid blue!
Welcome to our retreat, ye jovial few,
In this the merriest hey-day of the year!
Ho! for the rush of the descending stream,
Bright in the morning beam!

Ho! for the shouting crew, the echoing shore!
The rifle's crack amid the vocal glades;
The torrent's long reverberating roar;
The flash of flying gems from paddle blades;
The twilight hush falling on lengthening shades!
Welcome the song, the chorus, the *encore*,
The tale of awe, the joke, the repartee,—
The evening jollity!

Ho! for the camp! Ho! for the boughy bed!
The welcoming firelight's gleam, reflected far,
On glassy lake, and leafy boughs o'erhead!
Ho! for companionship of moon and star,
Where sandy coves and spreading branches are!

Welcome! the sylvan board at evening spread,
When merry hunters from their sport return
To bid the camp-fire burn!

Ho! for the promised season of delight!
Leave we our plodding, cast our care behind;
To the wide woods we 'll take our annual flight,—
The body brace, invigorate the mind:
Come! ye to nature genially inclined,
To the free life, the sylvan sound and sight
The forest's fortune and the lake's career,—
The charm of all the year!

VII.

The death of Schiller, we are told, was preceded by a desire, almost overmastering,—

"To wander forth wherever lie
The homes and haunts of human kind."

Something of this feeling possesses me with the coming in of autumn. Amid blistering heats I can tamely submit to the yoke and the treadmill; but by the first sparkle of October frost, and the first tinge of maple leaves, I am stung with a gypsy-virus, and straightway assert my liberty. Then I protest against all home-keeping, and affect the pilgrim's wal-

let,—deeming, with that true lover of autumnal roving, Bliss Carman, that—

"The joys of the road are chiefly these:
A crimson touch on the hard-wood trees;

A vagrant morning wide and blue,
In early fall, when the wind walks, too;

A shadowy highway cool and brown,
Alluring up and enticing down

From rippled water to dappled swamp,
From purple glory to scarlet pomp;

The outward eye, the quiet will,
The striding heart from hill to hill;

The tempter apple over the fence;
The cobweb bloom on the yellow quince;

The palish asters along the wood,—
A lyric touch of the solitude;

An open hand, an easy shoe,
And a hope to make the day go through,—

Another to sleep with, and a third
To wake me up at the voice of a bird;

The resonant far-listening morn,
And the hoarse whisper of the corn;

The crickets mourning their comrades lost,
In the night's retreat from the gathering frost;

Or is it their slogan, plaintive and shrill,
As they beat on their corslets valiant still?

A hunger fit for the kings of the sea,
And a loaf of bread for Dickon and me;

. . . . . .

An idle noon, a bubbling spring,
The sea in the pine-tops murmuring."

Wordsworth, we remember, coveted a figment of Mrs. Barbauld's muse, and certainly her

"Life, we have been long together,"

is so like some of his own literary children that we do not wonder if he felt like adopting it and bringing it home. For an unlike reason we have cast wandering, wistful eyes on another waif of Carman, adrift in newspaperdom, because the spirit of it is so like what we feel, while the expression is so different from anything attributable to us. Nevertheless, we are tempted to adopt it, though, un-

equal in degree, it should show itself a prince among peasants, in very scorn of our unkempt group. It is a song, indeed,—so quickening to the blood, so consonant with our emotion so soon as the nomad season commences, that should a procession of the elves [illegible] to the maple-hills with a band of music, their "skreeling" at their pipes and the "pan-pan-rataplan" of their drum might fit the rattling, rollicking words of our poet:

OCTOBER.

There is something in the autumn that is native to my blood—
Touch of manner, hint of mood;
And my heart is like a rhyme,
With the yellow and the purple and the crimson keeping time.

The scarlet of the maples can shake me like a cry
Of bugles going by,
And my lonely spirit thrills
To see the frosty asters like smoke upon the hills.

There is something in October sets the gypsy blood astir;
We must rise and follow her,
When from every hill of flame
She calls, and calls each vagabond by name.

VIII.

The carnival of color is now at its height, despite the occasional drenchiness of autumnal leaves; the spectacular play of the season is in its third and most interesting act. You need not go far to find the "bush on fire with God." All our street is a tent of gold, draped with hangings, as torn from a myriad of rainbows,—and a tent it is, fit for the conference of kings. The other day I stood upon a hill-top and looked over a wide circuit of forest country. Tree and bush were everywhere aflame with color. In truth, it was a glorious prospect!

> "Circling forests, by ethereal touch
> Enchanted, wear the livery of the sky,
> As if about to melt in golden light,
> Shapes of one heavenly vision."*

So, I thought, can a God paint, with frost for pigment, and sunbeam for pencil. That panorama of delight I shall not soon forget.

Notice everywhere the deepening hues—how profuse, how various! See these mosses, these lichens, and creepers,—how wondrously

* "Ion: A Tragedy," by Thomas Noon Talfourd.

they are dyed! Look at these shrubs of many kinds,—these are the undergarments of the forest, which, with the little, late flowers, form the frills and little ruffs and spangles with which our sylvan beauty loves to adorn herself. They all help to swell the volume of gorgeousness, and to make of the woods a dream of fairyland. See where the maple—that pride of leafy things!—merges into richness, breaks into change of hue! What wonders have been in a single night accomplished! A limb of this tree here and there stipples and dashes the darker green, and the still duskier furze. Afar off the maple's royalty arrests you. This is indeed the bush on fire, with that beech behind it to give golden point to the flame. See where it has begun to purple, with gilded streaks cutting through its kingliness of hue. Here a tint softens, and there it grows in brilliancy. It is an anthem of color, running through the entire scale. The duller shade of the ash is the more noticeable, being so seldom seen.

The maple is in its investiture, the prime of trees. It is, according to one of our poets, "the maple of sunny branches."* And an-

*Charles G. D. Roberts.

other, who had a keen eye for color, paints our tree of the most finely-pictured leaves:

"The maple swamps glow like a sunset sea,
Each leaf a ripple with its separate flush;
All round the wood's edge creeps the skirting blaze
Of bush as low as when, on cloudy days,
Ere the rain falls the farmer burns his brush."*

It has a peculiar loveliness in its vernal season, but just now we dote on it. It is a fountain of sweetness before March comes in, and its first buddings gladden us; the richness of its clustering shade makes cool and dreamy the summer; but now it is incomparable—a crown of glory! Give me plenty of firs, a background of whispering pines, some spiny spruces, a hemlock or two, nor will I ignore the oak, looking

"A sachem, in red blanket wrapt."

Some lady-birches should scatter here and there immaculate graces in the fore, or we can not be quite content.

"I only know there never
Seem darker stains on me
Than when I come and look on them,
And all their whiteness see."†

*James Russell Lowell. †Ralph H. Shaw.

But standing well out before them all, should be the maple—"queen of the forest!"—with her crown of rubies on. Seeing this, I will take off my shoes—I will uncover my head. I will not ask for the Voice in Horeb, and the bush unconsumed in fire!

Notice the maple out on yonder hill, with its foliage against the sky. It shows upon the blue like a blood-red flag waved from a fortress. It challenges your pride and admiration. It summons your fancy to render tribute. If you have any finer feeling,—any of the poetic ore in your treasury, you may surrender it at discretion. See! how all along the swampy margins, beyond the dwarfed skeletons of trees, grayly bemossed, the low shrub-maples have first begun to change. Surely the woods have begun their autumnal gayety by putting on a splendid hem! How royal those crimsons and purples are! Wine-dark depths of shade! Artist! you can not approach this magnificence! Come to the woods, not so much to copy as to admire—to worship.

Now is the season for walking where

"October woods with light are all aglow;
Their summer paths, dim as monastic aisles,
Are lighted now from golden leaves below,
Through golden leaves above the sunshine smiles."

A carpet, brilliant as the canopy overhead, lies under your feet. A golden fringe lines the way; it is the autumn flower the poets most have sung. There is also the blossom that seems a cerulean bit dropped down. The maple's form gains splendor by reflection in the waters of the wayside pool. But, when the silent lake mirrors the clear concavity of the sky, and around it the trees in all their holiday dresses look down, ah! is it not delicious? Reflection makes so much of this world's beauty!

> "The swan upon St. Mary's lake
> Floats double, swan and shadow;"

and so gives us a double joy. Yes, these late hours of golden September yield us exquisite enjoyment, whenever we can give an afternoon to the woods. A refreshment to the eye is the grassy slope itself, over which we go to reach the nearest grove. "The green herb," declares Ruskin, "is, of all nature, that which is most essential to the healthy spiritual life of man. Most of us do not need fine scenery; the precipice and the mountain-peak are not intended to be seen by all men,—perhaps their power is greatest over those

who are unaccustomed to them. But trees, and fields, and flowers were made for all, and are necessary for all." The grassy field, or the lane, is, therefore, to us the prelude of the forest. A sense of strength and majesty enters through the eye from the stone-colored bole of this smooth beech, and informs the spirit. It consumes our care to see the maple burn. It is good to scatter our petty fears by taking to ourself the terrors of the grim and dusky hemlocks. We are graced with a new courtesy by taking off our hat before the lissome birch, in her satin vest; she is

> "So purely beautiful—
> A lady—wholly one!"

Stop and notice where "bright the sumach burns," familiar and dear from our childhood. Stoop and see where the ferns are turning brown—fading gracefully. No growing thing is more congenial to me than the fern my daughter brought from the woods, and set in my window. We love ferns, though here so numerous they are crushed where we tread. The wind can break them—the wind that plucks the leaf to cast it in the rivulet. Take an hour, as often as you can, to make your

truce with care. When you go homeward, the same enchantment is yours that attended your coming.

There come in mind the closing stanzas of Whittier's "Chapel of the Hermits:"

"We rose and slowly homeward turned,
While down the west the sunset burned;
And in its light, hill, wood, and tide,
And human forms, seemed glorified.

The village homes transfigured stood,
And purple bluffs, whose belting wood
Across the waters leaned to hold
The yellow leaves, like lamps of gold."

IX.

"'T is in the unseen clime that soft and fair
Nor blight nor wither; here the tenderest flower
Must soonest fade."

There are certain blossoms that glow toward me from the garden, and that brighten the view from the window-seat. After the evanescence of violet and rose, they are called everlasting. The distance gives them a certain factitious luster, so that they look as freshly-bright as any of their fair companions. The dew falls on them, as upon other, softer,

tenderer flowers; but they can also endure the frost. They keep company with the velvet pansy, they neighbor with the silken rose, and hobnob with the lush splendors of dahlia and peony; but, if you approach and touch them, they are, to the seeming, harsh and hard; they bloom, yet rustle dry. In my present mood, I find here some resemblance to my own nature. I fear me, I am doomed to disappoint some who, seeing me from a distance, draw nearer to touch. Not that I have ever been, or wish ever to be, a subject of idolatry; yet they who too much handle their idols have ever had most occasion to recoil from asperity. Yet there is this virtue about the "everlasting" flower—it will endure. When snow lies over the matted leaves where the warm, moist, lustrous children of the garden dwelt, and the dry stalks that once bore rich, commanding blooms, rustle in the wind, the wreaths of "everlasting" blossoms look still smiling from the fire-lit walls of your cosy room, making late cheer, and giving you a winter-welcome. We love and quote Wordsworth:

> "O sir, the good die first,
> And they whose hearts are dry as summer dust
> Burn to the socket;"

which seems to me a scanty courtesy to the "hard," it may be, but yet, "good gray heads" that grow old among us,—of whom his own was the most eminent and venerable. Thank God for the human flowers, that may sometimes seem a trifle husky, but are loth to fade! I love to remember a brief poem by Robert Southey, about "The Holly Tree,"—one of the most genuine this somewhat discredited muse has afforded us,—the following lines in particular:

"And though abroad perchance I might appear
Harsh and austere,
To those who on my leisure would intrude,
Reserved and rude;
Gentle at home among my friends I'd be,
Like the high leaves upon the holly-tree.

And should my youth, as youth is apt, I know,
Some harshness show,
All vain asperities, I day by day
Would wear away.
Till the smooth temper of my age should be
Like the high leaves upon the holly-tree.

And as when all the summer trees are seen
So bright and green,
The holly leaves their fadeless hues display
Less bright than they,
Yet when the bare and wintry woods we see,
What then so cheerful as the holly-tree?

So serious should my youth appear among
The thoughtless throng,
So would I seem amid the young and gay
More grave than they,
That in my age so cheerful I might be
As the green winter of the holly-tree."

X.

As autumn makes her full-dress entrée to the Dominion, she has abundant recognition by Canadian poets, whose pages are rich with her color. Thus, Isabella Valancey Crawford:

"The land had put his ruddy gauntlet on,
Of harvest gold, to dash in Famine's face.
And like a vintage wain, deep dy'd with juice,
The great moon falter'd up the ripe, blue sky
Drawn by silver stars. . . ."

Roberts, painter of the Tantramar, and poet of "the long dikes of Westmoreland," shows us how the autumnal woods look,—

"When the gray lake-water rushes
Past the dripping alder bushes,
And the bodeful autumn wind
In the fir-tree weeps and hushes,—

When the air is sharply damp
Round the solitary camp,
And the moose-bush in the thicket
Glimmers like a scarlet lamp,—

When the birches twinkle yellow,
And the cornel bunches mellow,
And the owl across the twilight
Trumpets to his downy fellow,—

When the nut-fed chipmunks romp
Through the maples' crimson pomp,
And the slim viburnum flushes
In the darkness of the swamp."

Lampman paints "An Octobery Sunset," and shows us the season when—

"The cornfields all are brown, and brown the meadows
With the blown leaves' wind-heapèd traceries
And the brown thistle stems that cast no shadows,
And bear no bloom for bees."

Ethelwyn Wetherald, Duncan C. Scott, and others we might name, give autumnal pictures well worthy our citation; and Carman, who has caught the luxury of October coloring, shows how still are the autumn noons, tinged by

"The soft purple haze
Of smoldering camp-fires;"

shows us "the tatters of pale aster blue, descried by the roadside," and

"The swamp maples, here and there a shred
Of Indian red."

And fit for this season of dream and romance is this delightful lyric of his:

GOLDEN ROWAN.

She lived where the mountains go down
to the sea,
And river and tide confer.
Golden rowan, in Menalowan,
Was the name they gave to her.

She had the soul to circumstance
Can hurry or deter.
Golden rowan, of Menalowan,
How time stood still for her!

Her playmates for their lovers grew,
But that shy wanderer,
Golden rowan, of Menalowan,
Knew love was not for her.

Hers was the love of wilding things;
To hear a squirrel chirr
In the golden rowan of Menalowan
Was joy enough for her.

She sleeps on the hill with the lonely sun,
Where in the days that were,
The golden rowan of Menalowan
So often shadowed her.

The scarlet fruit will come to fill,
The scarlet spring to stir
The golden rowan of Menalowan,
And wake no dream for her.

Only the wind is over her grave,
For mourner and comforter;
And "golden rowan, of Menalowan,"
Is all we know of her.

XI.

I went, with Grace and Harold, to gather acorns; which, in this year of scant crops, are found here in abundance. The oaks grow with other deciduous trees, and a few pines, along the bank of the Penobscot; and the well-worn path skirting the edge of the bluff is an ideal one for strolling in these perfect afternoons. When Grace had filled her basket, and Harold his grape-box, we sat for a while under a leaning pine,—a headland sentinel where the bluff juts out to the stream, and where we could look for a considerable distance down its calm and sunny waters. We watched the vessels, and the crossing ferry-boat, for a while in silence, when Harold bethought him of a story I had commenced to tell him on an evening, and which was cut short by interruption.

"It was a story," I said, "concerning the little daughter of an English officer stationed in South Africa. This blue-eyed little girl had many soldiers to love her, for there were

no others so fair as she in that land; and many a kind hand was laid on her little curly head; in fact, the beautiful Lottie became the darling of the regiment; while she did not spoil because they petted her, for her heart was golden, like her head. She had a child's love for flowers; and many and beautiful are the posies growing in that far-away land. So this 'little image of her mother,' as they called her, went away into a meadow to gather blossoms. Can you not see her sunny face in that fair meadow, with her hair floating free? It seemed a delightful place to her. The sod was rich, the grass was thick and green, and often in her glee she stooped to pluck the blossoms that glowed around her,—

"'Carnation, purple, azure, or gay speck'd with gold.'

"It was good to have so much freedom, she thought; so, soon she strayed beyond the meadow into an old forest, grand and cool, whose shade seemed to invite her to enter. While the day lasted, she wandered fearlessly on. There were spaces and avenues in the wood, through which she went, that seemed just as pleasant to her as the meadow; for here she could sit down on mossy banks and

tufts of grass, and gather many beautiful blossoms. Poor, dear little soul! when the dusk fell, and she tried to find her way back over the paths by which she had come, she became lost and bewildered, and only went farther and farther out of her way. Her heart beat very wildly, and her tears were many, as she hastened on, but she did not cry aloud. By and by she came to a brook, which she partly crossed on the stones; then, as she did not know what to do, she staid there, standing on a flat rock, with her back against a very large one. Perhaps there was One who made it to her as 'the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.' When night came on, and it was her bedtime, she said her evening prayer, just as she always did, and thought she would wait there till her papa came for her. . . . In the morning he found her standing there, the sun shining on her little tear-stained face: she was sure he would come."

"What did her papa say to her?" said Grace.

"Nothing, at first; he just took her up in his arms, hugged her to him, and carried her away homeward. But, afterwards, when he asked her what she saw there in the night, she told

him what made him tremble. She said she saw the moon come up above the trees; and then three or four great dogs came down to the water to drink."

"Lions! Was n't they lions, papa?" broke in Harold, eagerly.

"Yes, they were lions. She said they came up to her, snuffed at her; then they licked her hands and cheek. They looked at her a while, then shook their shaggy manes, turned, and went away."

"O!" exclaimed Grace, "I should have been so frightened! Were their tongues soft, or rough, like the cat's, when they lapped her? Well, I am so glad they did n't eat her,—why did n't they eat her, papa?"

"Perhaps they was n't hungry," said Harold.

"More likely they pitied the poor girl," Grace rejoined.

"Probably they pitied the tot; she was so little and so sweet, and so strange a being to find in that lonely place. But can you think of no other reason, my dear ones, why the lions did not hurt her?"

"The lions did n't hurt Daniel, 'cause God would n't let 'em," said Grace.

"Right, my child. And are not these the

best helps to safety—God, and a pure heart? What was it Daniel said to the king, who wondered to find him alive that morning? 'My God hath sent his angel, and has shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me.' So might the little girl have said, if she had thought of it. Heaven grant that, in the hour of their peril, my darlings may be found as trustful and as innocent. A pure heart is our best talisman."

XII.

Autumn is the season of star-songs, and of astral fancies. Then, when the golden-rod is losing its bloom, and the ripened fruit is falling, and the leaves are swept away in splendor, clusters of fire are hung in every dark tree, the "young-eyed cherubim" begin to choir, and the poet's heart to burn. Then it is he turns his eyes upon the heavens, to behold

> "The sun,
> And the most patient brilliance of the moon,
> And stars by thousands."

Then it is, if ever, he wishes

> "For wings to soar away
> And mix with their eternal ray;"

or wishes, if he may not be raised to such a godlike estate, that he at the least might be able to draw "an angel down."

It was when the stars had begun to shine with their autumnal luster that I had an astronomical dream—or an astrological one, if there be any preference in designation. The heavens were inscribed with fiery diagrams,—the Second Advent chart entire, with the planispheric wonders of the Apocalypse and the mysteries of the Hebrew seer turned loose, together with all the comets that have ever appeared in our system since the memory of man. Like wild colts in a pasture, these celestial coursers ran visibly about the sky. Now, do not attribute this riotous display to a diet of mince-pie or cucumbers, nor dub mine "a dyspeptic's dream;" for in the hours precedent to that sedative, the pillow, an abstinent man am I. Whether the vision holds within it any significance, even were a Joseph or a Daniel here to interpret it, I can not say; only this, that the impression was flamboyantly vivid.

Our calmer minds and colder eyes have been accustomed to look toward the heavenly bodies as to the types of steadfast being and unfailing regularity.

"The silent heavens have goings on,
The stars have tasks."

Ages of time are required for the slightest variations of these distant orbs. We look, and Sirius is there. Who expects Ursa Major to shift his place? What seems to us at once more majestic and more secure than these golden milestones of infinite space! Hamurabi, Homer, Job looked on the same familiar clusters that greet our eyes, and named them, even as we name them, — Arcturus — Pleiades — Orion:

"He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength, . . .
Which commandeth the sun,
And it ariseth not,
And which sealeth up the stars. . . .
Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades,
And the chambers of the south.*

Thus monstrous forms o'er heaven's nocturnal arch,
Seen by the sage in pomp celestial march;
See Aries there his glittering brow unfold,
And raging Taurus toss his horns of gold;
With bended bow the sullen Archer lowers,
And there Aquarius comes with all his showers;
Lions and centaurs, gorgons, hydras rise,
And gods and heroes blaze along the skies."†

*Job. †Homer.

And yet,—musing on the time when the heavens shall be no more, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat,—

"When fire
Shall to the battlements of heaven aspire,"—

a half-insane and wizard fancy looks up, and expects to see the shining universe suddenly disbanded and dissolved; as if God did not work through infinite æons to the accomplishment of his decrees, before—to use the majestic terms of the Hebrew Scriptures—"the heavens are rolled up as a scroll." And if a comet should appear, what superstitious woes and terrors will it not carry in its train! What rueful, royal significance of fate, those shadowy, supernumeraries of the sky once possessed!

"The heavens themselves blaze forth the death of princes."

The old Roman Augurs saw in the comet which appeared at the time when Julius Cæsar died, a glorious chariot sent to carry his dauntless spirit to the gods. Such an appearance was dreaded as

"Threatening the world with famine, plague, and war;
To princes, death; to kingdoms, many curses;

To all estates, inevitable losses;
To herdsmen, rot; to plowmen, hapless seasons;
To seasons, storms; to cities, civil treasons."

How antiquated to the devotee of modern literature, or to the student of recent astronomy, will seem this bit of early English: *"Cometes signifie corruptions of the ayre. They are signs of the warres, of changing kyngedomes, great dearthe of corn, yea, a common deathe of man and beast."* And what romancer in the field of astronomy to-day will gravely set down a statement like the following? *"Experience is an eminent evidence that a comet like a sword portendeth war; and a hairy comet with a beard denoteth the death of kings, as if God and Nature intended by comets to ring the knells of princes, esteeming bells in churches upon earth not sacred enough for such illustrious eminent performances."* The writer evidently believed that "divinity doth hedge a king," and thought that royal people, like angels, are of a distinct and superior species.

The wild-fire astronomers are not yet extinct; but they trim their sails to move on another tack than that of the old-time superstition. Comets are still of curious interest;

but no longer, unless to some exceptionally benighted vision, portentous. In the year 1812 a comet appeared in our northern sky, which became an object of awe and apprehension to many midnight gazers, as it was believed by some to be the identical star that heralded the birth of our Savior, and now appearing the second time, as the forerunner of his final coming to judgment, and the destruction of the world. But there was one, at least, who looked upon it without fear, though with delight; and, as he was a poet,* he has left us a record of the impression it made upon him. I, too, remember having, while yet a child, crept from my bed to gaze again with awe and wonder, not unmingled with delight, upon a later silvery, shadowy thing, seen through my chamber window:

How lovely is this wildered scene,
  As twilight from her vaults so blue
Steals soft o'er Yarrow's mountains green,
  To sleep embalmed in midnight dew.

All hail, ye hills, whose towering height,
  Like shadows, scoops the yielding sky!
And thou, mysterious guest of night,
  Dread traveler of immensity.

*The Ettrick Shepherd.

Stranger of heaven, I bid thee hail!
Shred from the pall of glory riven,
That flashest in celestial gale,
Broad pennon of the King of heaven!

Art thou the flag of woe and death,
From angel's ensign staff unfurled?
Art thou the standard of His wrath,
Waved o'er a sordid sinful world?

No, from that pure pellucid beam,
That erst o'er plains of Bethlehem shone,
No latent evil we can deem,
Bright herald of the eternal throne!

Whate'er portends thy front of fire,
Thy streaming locks so lovely pale;
Or peace to man, or judgments dire,
Stranger of heaven, I bid thee hail!

Where hast thou roamed these thousand years?
Why sought these polar paths again,
From wilderness of glowing spheres
To fling thy vesture o'er the wain?

And when thou scal'st the milky way,
And vanishest from human view,
A thousand worlds shall hail thy ray
Through wilds of yon empyreal blue.

O on thy rapid prow to glide!
To sail the boundless skies with thee,
And plow the twinkling stars aside,
Light the gray portals of the morn.

To brush the embers from the sun,
  The icicles from off the pole,
Then far to other systems run,
  Where other moons and planets roll!

Stranger of heaven! O let thine eye
  Smile on a rapt enthusiast's dream;
Eccentric as thy course on high
  And airy as thine ambient beam.

And long, long may thy silver ray
  Our northern arch at eve adorn;
Then, wheeling to the east away,
  Light the gray portals of the morn.

XIII.

What celestial virtue is in yonder star, that it should magnetize my thought, or that its alluring sparkle should wing my spirit away on another track from this over which I have seemed to be traveling? It matters not if some conscious spirit is there, and from it an effluence diffusing; or, if it be only the point of immaculate beauty that has lifted my musing mind,—the pleasant result is the same; care and weariness are fading from me, as if they were haggard ghosts, unable to support themselves before that fair and steady gaze, so con-

stant, serene, untroubled. There!—the spell is complete! I have forgotten the chill that is in this air, so late at evening, and have spiritualized the river-mist that has been clinging around me with eerie suggestiveness, over all this lonely road. I am, or was, a tired man,—for this is the lull following the full pressure of Sabbath activity; and what frail preacher has not by that time spent his nerve to tedium, to exhaustion? But, under the angel-touch of this star, and with memory, and this fairer than Diana face to shine upon me,—

> "Life must be all poetry,
> And weariness a name."

So I throw myself back under the cover of the old carriage, and let Dinah, if she will, wander into the land of dreams.

It is the same star that looked upon my boyhood, and is one of the few objects familiar to me then, I can still look upon. Blessed it is that, however we wander, our heavenly companions do not greatly change, nor pass from our view. And now I seem to sit upon a certain hill, and look upon that star. The tinkle of a cow bell sounds from the corner

of the pasture fence; the croak and peep of frogs come from the pool in the hollow, beyond the clump of spruces; the shades are falling deeper where stands the white-walled cottage, and I hear my mother's voice calling me,—but still I sit musing, held by the golden finger of the star. So I am away with my old shining friend to Acadia, and to that region of it to me most homelike, most enchanting and radiant, even like my star; most richly dowered of nature, most favored by the poetic and historic muse. Is it not singular I am here so quickly, and without in the least disarranging present concerns, or impeding my journey along this mist-muffled river? I have eluded the railways; the little steamer that crosses Fundy has been untrodden by my corporeal feet; yet I have gone to Acadia, not leaving my mare without a driver. Even so!

"How swift is a glance of the mind!
Compared with the speed of its flight
The tempest itself lags behind,
And the swift-winged arrows of light.
When I think of my dear native land
In a moment I seem to be there." . . .

Those Sabbath evenings at home! Out of that past, which never comes save in dreams,—

and yet, it seems, must be always coming,—their voices break melodiously; and move ever into clearer vision the beautiful semblances of our singers, chastened, sainted, filled with holiest light. O, thou star! art thou a witness where some of them are now? The hours, when the shadows fell and the lamp was lighted, fled away on musical wings. Again the scene is full before me, and I see how cares were banished, and sorrows consoled:—

"I see my father in his chair,
With his two babes upon his knee,
While grandly on the evening air
Roll out the strains of old *Dundee:*
With reverent hearts, we happy boys
Would soulful join the strain divine,
While *Ocean,* or *Auld Lyng Syne,*
Would swell the ocean of our joys.

And one sweet voice there was, which rose
In tenor musical and clear.
Such as from harp æolian flows;
And evermore thy voice I hear
In cadence soft'ning thro' the years,
And still I see thy tender eye,
Look, mother, as in years gone by,—
Our rainbow in a realm of tears!

. . . . . .

There was one more, whose deep-toned bass
Strengthened the music of our choir;
A vigorous form, of manly grace,
With laughing dark eyes, like his sire:
He was our buoyant sailor boy;
In life's first spring he left his home." . . .*

Thus, our family constituted a choir, and each could bear his part, with some credit to himself, on the scores of time and melody; but not infrequently were we re-enforced from the neighboring houses. On Sabbath evenings, when from the village the preacher was absent, for the behoof of neighboring hamlets, and when there was no public service,—or even after the people had been dismissed from prayers at the little meeting-house,—the several families of the neighborhood would assemble in one home, and then, with the old "Vocalist" open, Music's self would breathe and speak. Overhead shines the star, making a loftier anthem in the ear of him who is well pleased with listening; but, below the humble roof it looks upon, our voices uttering a heart-language he may esteem as sweeter.

"They tune their hearts, by far the noblest aim;
Perhaps *Dundee's* wild-warbling measures rise,
Or plaintive *Martyrs* worthy of the name;

* Rev. Burton W. Lockhart, D. D.

Or noble *Elgin* beats the heavenward flame,
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays:
Compared with these Italian trills are tame;
The tickl'd ears no heart-felt raptures raise,
Nae unison hae they with our Creator's praise."

Again the group is gathered. There is the aged grandmother—whose passion was music—with closed eyes and swaying body, and spirit blissfully rocking in its harmonious cradle, chanting, with breaking voice, when at eighty years. Not sacred songs alone had moving power with her; for almost instinctively her foot would caress the floor at sound of a violin, long since she ceased to be a maiden. Her ear was true as the pitch-pipe. Her peculiarly effective rendering of the funereal, yet sympathetic, *China*,—that score some one has declared fine enough for the use of an angel,—lingers in memory still. Again I hear the family choir busy with the tenderly-beautiful lyric of Heber, mingling the most precious memory of childhood with Sharon's flowery region, and hallowed waters that "run softly,"—

"Siloam's brook that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God."*

*Milton.

While the former things remain, and the past treasures are dear unto us, the words and the old-time air will not lose their charm;—I shall still hear them singing,—

"By cool Siloam's shady rill
How fair the lily grows!
How sweet the breath, beneath the hill,
Of Sharon's dewy rose!

Lo! such the child whose early feet
The paths of peace have trod;
Whose secret heart, with influence sweet,
Is upward drawn to God."

Ah, when shall we hear again that deep, full-hearted singing, such as now resounds in my memory,—that singing with the passion in it, and in which the roused soul had full play? The heart of this great world pulses musically, as of old; but do the sons of men utter themselves in song as spontaneously as in our earlier years,—putting forth their

"Artless notes in simple guise,
Those strains that once did sweet in Zion glide?"

The home has fallen into silence, almost; many of the sweet singing voices have ceased; the strains that ring to-night in memory can

not be heard there; the things of music that please us best are in the past; we are tempted to mingle discontent with gentle memories, for we are never so deeply gratified in these days of organs, choirs, conservatories, trills, arias, and artistic, fantastic, and self-conscious singing. The change and the fault may be with us, but we are compelled to cry with our poet of Rydal,—

"Sing aloud
Old Songs, the precious music of the heart!"

XIV.

"Silently the shades of evening
Gather round my lowly door;
Silently they bring before me
Faces I shall see no more.

O the lost, the unforgotten,
Though the world be oft forgot;
O the shrouded and the lonely,
In our hearts they perish not!"

Come, my love, and let us chase with song the shadows of this November evening; let us drown its wailing and sobbing. The Sabbath has been vested as a widow in her weeds of sorrow, and has wept away the light, as

one who has suffered without resignation. Hark! the throbbing heart of autumn—the beating of the rain without, the rattle of drops against the window! Let us mingle with the music of the storm, like silken gold shot through a darker skein, some serene fibers of a cheerful human melody. This day has brought no weariness, that is born of the task incessant; but my heart, unvoiced, is full of pent-up ardor—"is hot and restless." Come, let us be seated at the organ, and let the breathing reeds aid the reluctance of our unpracticed voices. Music shall be a great tide, like that river of God flowing from under the throne; it shall be, as Jean Paul Richter declared it, "a bridge over which our chastened and purified spirits shall enter a brighter world." Therefore, come, my love, be thou seated beside me, and give to the hymns that bear the burden, and utter the aspiration of the ages, "the music of thy voice." Rarely, indeed, have we the courage, I know, for what was our familiar exercise, and our matin and vesper habit. Yes, I know that the sweet child of our heart, in whom the music dwelt, lifts not now her voice in our hearing, spontaneous as the rolling thrush, at fall of evening; yet,

let us not therefore be silent. We have cares and occupations, we have regrets and sorrows; but let them not stifle song. Well, what shall it be? With what strain shall we commence? Shall it be

"Sun of my soul thou Savior dear,"

or,

"Lead thou, me on?"

No; let us begin with—

"O Love divine, that stooped to share
Our sharpest pang, our bitterest tear!"

or with that sweet and holy hymn of St. Bernard,—

"Jesus, the very thought of thee
With sweetness fills the breast;
But sweeter far thy face to see,
And in thy presence rest.

No voice can sing, no heart can frame,
Nor can the memory find
A sweeter sound than Jesus' name,
The Savior of mankind."

That is good! Let us have none but the best. Here are the strains our hearts delight in, that stimulate devotion, that awaken memory,—these divine hymns, and the well-tried, sweetly-enduring airs that match them,—Peterboro — Windham — Meditation — Bolyston

— Marlowe — Dundee! Ah! and here is Stockwell! so we pause over that. Suddenly at the close of the second stanza the organ ceases, our voices are silent. Why are tears in thine eyes, my dear one? What seest thou? What needs that question! Our vision and emotion are one. O, Music! and didst thou summon that procession of the vanished ones? Didst thou turn their pale faces and their appealing eyes so pathetically upon us? Ah! and do we wish to forget them, who loved us so? Nay! Nay! When we forget them there can be no more a remembrance. "In our hearts they perish not!" But we can sing no more, to-night. Depart, thou, heart-awakening spirit of Melody! Away! thou disquietest our thought in vain! "Thou speakest of the things that are not, and can not be," thou openest the rifled treasure-box, and scatterest the ashes of urns and the dust of tombs upon us. Therefore, for a while, be silent. Speak to us once more upon the morrow.

XV.

A bit of reminiscence. It was on a Sabbath evening, during one of my latest visits to the old home; my father and I had been abroad

together. We had been in attendance at the evening service, and had returned. The horse cared for, we came to the house, and sat with mother beside the kitchen fire. Over us had been a clouded sky of late October.

"Keen fitful gusts were whispering here and there,
Among the bushes, leafless half, and dry."

It was good to stretch out our hands to the warmth within, and listen to the chill moodiness of the wind that rustled in a melancholy way about the house. We sat conversing until it grew late, when father suggested that before retiring we should sing a hymn together, as had been our wont in time past; and he immediately struck up the tune known as Kentucky, with the familiar evening hymn of John Leland:

"The day is past and gone,
The evening shades appear;
O may we all remember well,
The night of death draws near!"

The melancholy musing vein was one my father much indulged, and the sound of the strain brought back a host of recollections. How often, in days when their children were

all about them, had that hymn been sung! We had all joined together then; but now the musical company, brother, sister, all had vanished and departed. The vision of that company, assembled "within the walls of home," came before me. I saw my father and mother grown aged and failing, and saw in my prospect old graves and new, and a house silent and deserted. When we came to the second stanza,—

> "We lay our garments by
> Upon our beds to rest;
> So death will soon disrobe us all
> Of what we 've here possessed,"—

the vision had overwhelmed me, and my voice was silent. In the middle of the third stanza—

> "Lord, keep us safe this night,
> Secure from all our fears,"—

my mother's voice failed, and ceased. I looked up and met her eyes, and read there what is unutterable by human lips. O, how pitifully sad, her face! Her eyes filled suddenly with tears, and her lips quivered. My father, being full of his song, with his head thrown back, kept on,—

"And when we early rise
And view th' unwearied sun,"—

when, suddenly, as missing our voices, he checked himself, and looked upon us half in surprise to witness our emotion; then, catching the infection of our mood, his eyes and lips also conveyed the unspeakable things of the heart, just for a moment. Then he rose suddenly, and said, "Let us go to bed." The hymn was left unfinished. Never again on earth did we lift our voices in song together. But may I not hope to meet my father and mother again in that place where hymns of God's children are not checked with tears, where the heart bears no painful burden, and

"Where beyond these voices there is peace?"

There, perhaps, we may conclude the hymn with the stanza which is my heart's fondest prayer:

"And when our days are past
And we from time remove,
O may we in thy bosom rest,
The bosom of thy love!"

XVI.

How singularly,—following upon the ecstatic incitements to musical expression, of the Hebrew psalmist: "Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power. Praise him for his mighty acts: praise him according to his excellent greatness. Praise him with the sound of the trumpet: praise him with the psaltery and harp. . . . Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high-sounding cymbals. Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord!"—comes such a passage as this from the "Confessions of St. Augustine," which shows how deeply the root of that rank ascetic weed had struck into his heart: "Sometimes I wish," he says, "the whole melody of sweet music, to which the Psalms of David are generally set, to be banished from my ears and that of the Church itself." He has the true Puritan desire to make his conscience the meter of the world, and to subject all differing natures to the law he imposes upon his own. How singular, too, does his statement seem, following the lyric of the lilies and the sparrows and ravens, and the hymn sung with His disciples before the an-

guish of Gethsemane and the cross; following the exhortation of the Chief Apostle, who exhorted his converts to the use and practice of sacred harmony: "Singing and making melody in your heart unto the Lord;" following the testimony of the Apocalyptic Spirit, and of him who "heard the voice as of a great thunder, and of harpers harping with their harps," and the "new song" which they sang "before the throne." The Saint might fall under suspicion of our Supreme Poet, who declared:

> "The man that hath no music in himself,
> Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
> Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils:
> The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
> And his affections dark as Erebus:
> Let no such man be trusted."

Yet Augustine looked upon music, not as his aversion, but his temptation. It was a thing of too great delight. "He blames himself," as Hugh Black says, "for letting the melody please him, and is suspicious of the emotions created by the music. He calls it a gratification of the flesh, that he should find more satisfaction in the divine words when they are sung with a sweet and accomplished voice than in

the reading of the words themselves." A master of hymnody and a lover of music has reminded us that—

> "We should suspect some danger nigh,
> When we possess delight."

But must we fly all things agreeable, on that account? Let us still use ourselves to all things fair and harmonious, as counting them innocent, while still we "watch and pray that we enter into no temptation to excess." Are there no gardens but the exotic and exuberant?

I would move to the accomplishment of my endless choice to the rhythm of a marching melody. If there be sirens in the course to wreck my bark, there are also angelic voices upon the waters, and they will not betray me. As one has said applying his words to a lower aim,—

> "Let music sound while he doth make his choice,
> Then if he lose, he makes a swaniike end,
> Fading in music."

If a woman is to be wooed with a song, God is so to be worshiped. I will deem, with Carlyle, that "music is a kind of inarticulate, unfathomable speech which leads us to the edge

of the infinite, and lets us for a moment gaze on that." Or, with Kirke White, that—

"Surely melody from heaven was sent,
To cheer the soul when tired with human strife,
To soothe the wayward heart by sorrow rent,
And soften down the rugged road of life."

Or, with Addison, that, "Music is the only sensual gratification which men may indulge unto excess without injury to their moral or religious feelings." Neither yet would I say just that; but perhaps might ask,—What constitutes excess in the measure of such an impalpable thing as music? Can there be an excessive appropriation of the infinite "deep of air," or of the waters of the crystal stream? Nay, music need not harm us by its excess; for, as a great preacher* once said happily, "All good music is sacred, if heard sacredly." We regret to know it degraded and profaned, or subject to an evil spirit. As Charles Wesley improvised and sung, when interrupted by a military band while preaching in the open air, so we adopt these words:

"Listed into the cause of sin
Why should a good be evil?
Music, alas! too long has been
Pressed to obey the devil.

* Beecher.

Drunken, or lewd, or light, the lay
Flowed to the soul's undoing,
Widened and strewed with flowers the way
Down to eternal ruin."

But even in this perversion, to the pure, music continues pure. I have found musical sounds of whatever kind a sedative to soothe and allay, or a sweet excitant to exalt and ennoble the emotions. To the air I furnish my own motive and the train of reflection. Yet surest, divinest, it is when directed to the highest aim:

"Take my voice, and let me sing
Always, only, for my King."

Cecil, listening rapt to the music of the organ in church, touched by genius, with the hand of a master upon its stops and keys, forgets the appropriate order of service, and searches tremblingly the pages of his prayer-book for the desired chapter of Isaiah. We forgive his absent thought and spiritual agitation; it is a confession of the depth of the man's soul and of the power of music! I see Milton's uplifted face as he fingers the keys of his instrument, and recall his words:

"I thence
Invoke Thy aid to my adventurous song
That with no middle flight intends to soar. . .

. . . Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for thou know'st. Thou from the first
Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread,
Dovelike, sat'st brooding on the vast abyss,
And madest it pregnant: what in me is dark
Illumine; what is low, raise and support."

And Bishop Ken,—our English psalmist of the morning and evening hymns, if with less of poetry, worships not with an inferior devotion,—has little fear of song. It delights him to reflect that, when he has been translated to the great congregation whose voices falter not, the sons of God on the earth will still be praising God in strains which he has given them. So the Wesleyan muse confesses to a like source of satisfaction:

"If well I know the tuneful art
To captivate the human heart,
The glory, Lord, be thine!
A servant of thy blessed will,
I here devote my utmost skill
To sound the praise divine.

Thine own musician, Lord, inspire,
And let my consecrated lyre
Repeat the psalmist's part;
His Son and Thine reveal in me,
And fill with sacred melody
The fibers of my heart."

XVII.

I have, this morning, had a vision of him who sang of the Messiah; and as a glimpse of his interior life gave me cheer, coming to the support of wavering resolution, I cried Amen! to the Being and the Word; for this is ever the fount of strength, the right arm of power, that a Being lies couchant behind the Word; and not only when a noble word is spoken, or a sublime emotion musically enshrined, but whenever, not momentarily, but through a whole career of trial, contempt, poverty, neglect, gainsaying,—

"A noble deed is wrought,
Our hearts in glad surprise
To higher levels rise.
The tidal wave of deeper souls
Into our inmost being rolls,
And lifts us unawares
Out of all meaner cares."

Behold, in this man, Handel, another memorable instance of celestial treasure, not squandered, but wisely husbanded and possessed, for mankind's behoof and his own. He had his divine ideal, an unseen pearl, behind a common coat, and a presence that, if not ordinary, compelled no instant acceptance. He, too, had his

industries—his plodding toil amid the rudiments of his art, patiently teaching his sphere to roll out into its place with destined music; thus, as a common man, he was a seeming delver in the ways of common men, which brought their wonder and their scorn that he should attempt above them and propose better things than they. He heard them say: "We live by bread and butter, and you starve," and he answered back, "Not only by bread,—

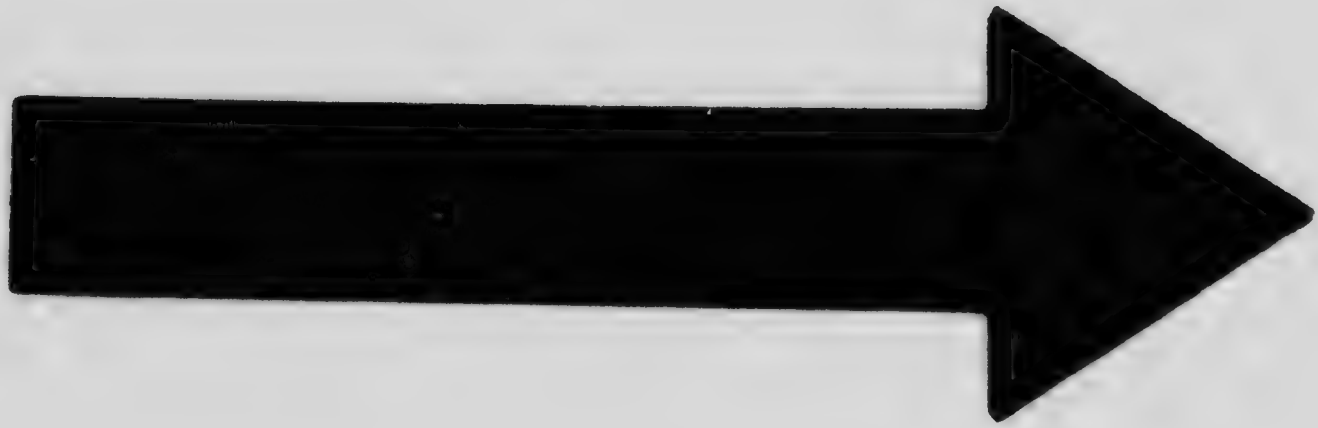
> "'We live by Admiration, Hope, and Love,
> And even as these are well and wisely fixed,
> In dignity of being we ascend.'"

He sung, and labored to deliver right the melodious message; but England was adder-deaf to him. The magnates heard only to mock. They had their concerts, and were crowded; he gave his and seemed alone; but the King was there,—though the courtly sneerer would not "intrude upon the privacy of his sovereign." It became the fashion to scorn this musical Milton, till no mime-follower, puppet, comic, or fool professional but had his jeer to fling, and must perish rather than hold it. Twice was he bankrupt; oft was

he faint, yet pursuing; but he had his mark and kept to it; "The Messiah" was written, and, when the time ripened, first Hibernia, and then Britain, was at his feet. Haydn cried out, "Handel is the Father of us all!" Mozart makes response: "When he chooses, Handel strikes like a thunderbolt;" and Beethoven gives emphasis, pointing to "the monarch of the musical world," and his forty volumes, with the declaration, "There—there is the truth!" Surely this man must fail, the common voice had said, and events seemed assenting sadly, but God and Time were on his side, and were found helping him; under the weight and pressure of grave or scornful opposition his music grew within him, as grass around a stone, until the seeming last became first, and his triumph was wonderful. He followed the noble in him, and the more ennobled it; and his God led him to the goal. So has it been put by a modern master:*

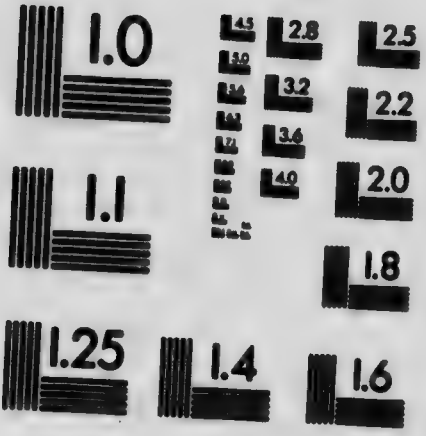
"Of the million or two, more or less,
I rule and possess,
One man, for some cause undefined,
Was least to my mind.
. . . . . .

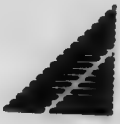
*Browning.



MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)





APPLIED IMAGE Inc

1653 East Main Street
Rochester, New York 14609 USA
(716) 482 - 0300 - Phone
(716) 288 - 5989 - Fax

When sudden—how think ye, the end?
Did I say 'without friend?'
Say rather, from marge to blue marge
The whole sky grew his targe
With the Sun's self for visible boss,
While an arm ran across
Which the earth heaved beneath like a breast
Where the wretch was safe prest;
Do you see? Just my vengeance complete,
The man sprung to his feet,
Stood erect, caught at God's skirts, and prayed!
So *I* was afraid!"

This is a man's glory, that sometimes, instead of a mud hovel, he will build himself a tent from a patch of God's infinite sky, and live in it royally on one of earth's crusts turning to manna on his lips, till the wise fingers of baser choosers cease from pointing, and his beautiful home gradually expands itself into a palace of crystal, or place of divine entertainment for coming multitudes, and a shrine and sanctuary where other like consecrated ones will live entempled. It is by *this,* men lift us, that they are better than their records show —the Whittiers and Elliotts, who rouse us with lyrical trumpets, and build the lofty rhyme of manhood; that they have a permanent some-

thing, defiant of life's shifting sand; that they are true to their ideals, and hold their—

"Faith in the whispers of the lonely muse
When the whole world seems adverse to desert."

Why is it we are so moved when these men speak to us? It is that these were true; no wealth, celebrity, or applause could be good enough for them to live for. That Handel stirs our blood, when the heart of the cathedral throbs, and the very pave-stones tremble, as if the Deity trod them, at the breath of his "Messiah;" that, when again we hear the lofty strain of Paradise begin,—

"Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe:"

or, when we see the awful minstrel roll his sightless orbs to heaven, and hear the cry,—

"Descend from heaven, Urania!"

our souls are conscious of wings; or that when the muse of Rydal sings of Duty and of Immortality, we learn of new powers within us, flows from a parallel majesty of character in *them*,—

a might of manhood, yea, of godhood, coequal with the song. Thus it moves us the more that they live and practice the nobleness they teach in song; and we are stirred by a heroic strain of uniform character, a might of personality, superbly beyond the dashing courage that wins a battle, or the hungry tenacity that resists a siege. Then—

> "Honor to those whose words or deeds
> Thus help us in our daily needs,
> And by their overflow
> Raise us from what is low."

XVIII.

Now, the flame of the forest burns low, and the "dreamy magical light" of "the summer of All Saints" has been over us.

> "Now the leaf
> Incessant rustles from the mournful grove."

A few embers remain; all the rest are ashes. The "carmine glare," and the golden haze, that seemed neighbors of the sunset, linger no longer. Little birds, that cheered us of late, sing no longer in their green tents. They said to one another, "Let us go!" and the poet,

bereft of song, is alone with his musing. Yet some of the feathered tribes remain to give voice to the woods,—but not the jubilant voice of summer. The plaintive Bob White was heard a little time ago; and yet in September there are plenty of blackbirds, that, with their "frequent notes," keep up the music of autumn, and with their "chatter" in "the field-side wood."

"Blackbird and jay share with the crafty crow,"

where such as still remain "are free to glean upon the stubble." But, when the swallow has gone, we breathe a sigh of regret with our Canadian poet:*

"In the southward sky
The late swallows fly,
The red low willows
In the river quiver;
From the beeches nigh
Russet leaves sail by,
The tawny billows
In the chill wind shiver;
The beech burs burst,
And the nuts down patter;
The red squirrels chatter
O'er the wealth disperst.
. . . . . .

*Roberts.

In the keen late air
Is an impulse rare,
A sting like fire,
A desire past naming.
But the crisp mists rise
And my heart falls a-sighing,—
Sighing, sighing,
That the sweet time dies!"

Sweet, indeed, to the soul of the singer, though sad, are those calm days "ere the last red leaf is whirled away," and earth becomes drear under the bitter blast of November. Lowell loved them, for the sake of those "visionary tints the year puts on." He, too, painted well

"The swamp-oak with his royal purple, . . .
The chestnuts, lavish of their long-hid gold;"

and showed us how

"The tangled blackberry, crossed and recrossed,
weaves
A prickly network of ensanguined leaves."

Longfellow loved them; for it was then he saw "the prodigality of the golden harvest," the "revelations of light," when

"The leaves fall, russet-golden and blood-red,"

and heard "from far-off farms the sound of flails, beating the triumphal march of Ceres through the land." Did not Thomas Buchanan Read, in his "Closing Scene," give us perfect autumnal pictures? So loved them the numerous choir of musical ones whose strains are slipping into memory.

We walk under a shaded sky to-day. The wood is bereft of all its brightness. There is a hush in the air—a resonance, as of a harp-string tensely drawn. Whenever there is the slightest motion in the woods, you hear it; but there is not even the call of a crow or the chirr of a chipmunk. The chickadee has only a slender sound of cheer. There are symptoms that betoken gathering storm. Now a keen tinkle of the brooklet at a little distance, a sharp, startling crackle of the trodden bough,—these are all I hear. I pause—listen to the beating of my own heart: there is awe in the sound! A leaf loosens above me, and falls from bough to bough, with tiny rustle. Hark! I hear a voice! A far-away whisper, that comes nearer, as another russet disk floats by my ear: "We all do fade as a leaf." Pick it up, and gaze upon it. That is the skeleton and the

ashen relic of a man! "Even so," avers one of the wisest of our kind—

"My way of life
Is fall'n into the sere and yellow leaf."

"That time of year thou may'st in me behold,
When yellow leaves, or few, or none, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang."

And so, re-echoing the same, two centuries later, we hearken to "poor proud Byron,"—woeful as proud, alas!

"My days are in the yellow leaf;
The fruit and flower of life are gone,"

and, sad alternative!

"The worm, the canker, and the grief,
Are mine alone."

The same note lengthens, and the chord of memory vibrates to the touch of a Scottish minstrel—a half-forgotten Psalmody:

"Behold the emblem of thy state
In flowers that paint the field—
When chill the blast of winter blows,
Away the summer flies;

The flowers resign their sunny robes,
And all their beauty dies.
Nipped by the year the forest fades;
And, shaking to the wind,
The leaves toss to and fro, and streak
The wilderness behind."

XIX.

"Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher."
—Wordsworth.

I have gone into the orchard, not because the fruit is ripe, but because the day is; for I know Hesperia can entice without golden apples. This slope, lazily overspread by trees older than their owner, is a living emerald, drinking light, and dips down into the sunset. Afar and near,

"The day, with splendor old,
Sinks through the depths of gold."

Birds house plentifully among these branches; now they are convivial and sociable, as they flit from tree to tree, intercommuning with their neighbors, enlivening me with their chirp and carol. Thoughts are flying with their

wings; power creeps silently out of the ground; inspirations drop from the sky; fancies trickle in light from leaf-lips, and float mellowly down from bits of cloud, dream-white; emotions startle pleasantly with the droning flight of a bumble-bee, or the thud of a fallen apple; I am become the center of a cluster of beneficent forces. This is such a harvest as I long to reap. These mystery-bearing brains of ours—uppermost branches of this sentient life-tree—how here, in such a half solitude, they become the natural resting-places, or roosting-places, for ideas great and small, yet all of them with a certain divine light upon their plumage. Here the eagle and the wren harbor together; here come

> "Truths that wake
> To perish never;"

they come and go, and return again, just as these birds do; nor are they the exclusive inheritance or monopoly of any man; you can enslave them no more than you can enchain a ghost, or appropriate a shadow. Plato and Milton walk among these trees, and you are taken into a communion that makes you master

of all they felt or knew. You prove one divine right of kings, the divine right to ideas; they are the property of him who can entertain them, who can delight in them, weave for them a royal robe, or give them a spacious guest-chamber. Outwardly you may be yourself in rags, but, if you are inwardly fit, they will condescend to you like angels, and will walk with you in purple. They come down to us from afar; they seem to spring up in us anew, but they are not as old merely as Mencius or Socrates, or the unnamed earliest seer,—these thoughts with the gold of truth shot through them; they are from eternity, the old, the new, forever reappearing. They are like the grass that smiles in green on these green smiling trees that spread leaves and shadows. Is it not the grass of a thousand years ago? The long-enduring, haunting thoughts, come they not forth of God? and are they not rich in treasure of the Infinite? They are the peculiar glory of the seer and the artist, who stand where the light of Shekinah falls upon them; but we who are of the common multitude have our hours when we prize them too. Their temple-halls stand open for winds more balmy with

inspiration than were ever wafted over Thessaly to blow through, and through all their chambers float echoes of

> "The eternal deep
> Haunted forever by the eternal mind."

They come and go, and return again, like these birds. Who has not felt the sudden accession, and again desertion, of ideas and powers; the infiowing, the overflooding and entire possession of the soul; and then again, the

> "Fallings from us, vanishings,
> Blank misgivings,"

as if premonitory of that day when "desire shall fail . . . and those that look out of the windows be darkened," or when

> "Life and thought have gone away
> Side by side."

Never, never three sympathetic people shall come together but ideas and persentiments shall flit from brain to brain, like these birds from tree to tree. "That very thought occurred to me just before you uttered it," said my companion, as we sat together in the twilight here yesterday evening. Did poet or philosopher

originate his ideas? Rather he was *en rapport*, and they came to him; they settled on him from somewhere, like birds on the deck of a ship in midocean. They came to him who would entertain them, who waited for and drew them; who passed them through the finer mold of his brain and brought them to forms of higher delicacy and nobler beauty. Love transfused them as they passed the alembic of his individuality, and his genius converted their dusky carbon into the gleaming and precious. But the poet could no more create the least of them than he could create a sun. We are but the treasurers of a brilliant intellectual currency, and there is a government that will allow the master to open his mint and put thereupon his private stamp and superscription; but the bullion was found, not made, and the store can be made no greater than that God hid in the chambers of the rocks. Beautiful ideas! Inspiring, ennobling ideas! Ideas that feed me and fire me, that make a radiance of my way! Divine ideas! I am glad that ye have come to me! I will delight myself in the sweet, wholesome circulation, vital as the airs among these trees; or the sap within them. I will linger and wait for you; I will wash myself of the sordid and

the base; for your sake I will be passive, and I will be strenuous, that all your gift and gain may flow to me. Yet I can not but choose to be your willing slave and captive:

"The eye—it can not choose but see;
We can not bid the ear be still;
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
Against or with our will.
Nor less I deem that there are powers
Which of themselves our minds impress;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness."

XX.

"Life is—to wake, not sleep,
Rise, and not rest." —Browning.

O rich and precious decays of life, by which the soul's chief treasure is amassed! how can we prosper without you? And why will we mourn amid the pains by which we are endowed? Do we not grow, even as the forest giants, increasing our substance with the ripe result of all fallings from us; even by having counted many loves and hopes and aspirings, yea, our most valued product, dead and vain? And is not loss, or the shadow of it, the surest

test of true possession, and the best harbinger of continuance?

But if the thought born of the still woods be somber, it is also soothing. We recall the beautiful words of Ruskin: "If ever, in autumn, a pensiveness falls upon us as the leaves drift by in their fading, may we not wisely look up in hope to their mighty monuments? Behold how fair, how far prolonged, in arch and aisle, the avenues of the valley; the fringes of the hills! So stately—so eternal; the joy of man, the comfort of all living creatures; the glory of the earth—they are but monuments of those poor leaves that flit faintly past us to die. Let them not pass without our understanding their last counsel and example: that we also, careless of monument by the grave, may build it in the world—monument by which men may be taught to remember, not where we died, but where we lived."

Ah, well! We will be admonished. With Béranger we will scatter the gold, in the joy of charity, that might build our tomb. The essential conditions of our being are good, so we do not ourselves vitiate and embitter them. May we not still trust in Him who gave the flowering, and with whom is also the fading-time?

We will accept our autumn, when it may come after an unwasted summer. With willing grace may we sink, bright at our falling, as is the maple leaf; or, as the elm and the willow, may we yield our honors when the gathering time is near! Then, when we are in the clasp of Him who never relaxes, we may hear him say, "Mistake me not!"

"'Guess now who holds thee?' 'Death!' I said. But there
The silver answer rang. . . . 'Not Death, but Love!'"

XXI.

AN AUTUMN HYMN.

Autumn has come—sweet Sabbath of the year!
Its feast of splendor satiates our eyes;
Its saddening music, falling on the ear,
Bids pensive musing in the heart arise.
Now earlier shadows veil the sunset skies,
And the bright stars and harvest moon do shine;
The woodbine's blood-red leaves the morn espies
Hung from the dripping elm; the yellowing pine
And fading golden-rod denote the year's decline.

The light is mellow over all the hills;
Silence in all the vales sits listening;
A holy hush the sky's great temple fills,
As if earth waited for her spotless King:

Nor is there want of sacred ministering;—
The laden trees seem priests all consecrate;
The rustling cornfields seem to chant his praise.
Surely man's thankfulness, 'mid his estate,
A gladsome hymn should not forget to raise
To Him whose bounteous hand doth ever crown
our days.

To him be praise when harvest fields are bare,
And all the sheaves are safely gathered in;
When merry threshers vex the sunny air,
And ruddy apples crowd the scented bin!
Praise him, when from the dim mill's misty din,
In floury bags the golden meal comes home;
And praise him for the bread ye yet shall win,
When steaming horses plow the fertile loam,
And so prepare the way for harvests yet to come.

Praise him, when round the fireside, sparkling clear,
The household group at evening smiling meet!
To him whose goodness crowns the circling year
Lift up the choral hymn in accents sweet;
The comeliness of song lift to his seat
Who from his palace of eternal praise
His earth-born children hears their joys repeat,
Nor answer to their thankfulness delays,
But more their grateful love with blessing new
repays.

Our chasten'd hearts shall hunger not for gold;—
Enough the splendor of these sunset skies;
The scarlet pomp from maple bough unrolled,—
The high-built woods' resplendent fantasies:

Ah, think! if these no more could win thine eyes,—
Nor earth, nor sky, nor the majestic sea;—
If Love were gone—that jewel mortals prize,—
With all that makes the soul's felicity,
What then were gems and gold, O famish'd one!
to thee!

Not bread, that strengtheneth the heart of man—
For this be praise!—alone our Father gives;
More provident, the heavenly Husbandman
Gives that diviner food by which man lives:
Not gladdening wine alone the heart receives,
Nor oil, which makes his mortal face to shine;
Like autumn rain from dripping cottage eaves,
He gives the thirsty soul a draught divine:
Come! lay your thankful sheaves, firstfruits
upon His shrine!

L' Envoy.

(A Good Wish for My Reader.)

God bless thee, brother! May he give
Softly the treasure of the years
Into thy bosom; make thee live
The life that knows and sees and hears
The brightest, fairest, of the earth—
The certainties of hope and time,
Till that supreme, immortal birth
Wherein the soul shall reach her prime;—
Give thee his patience, kindness, truth,
His wondrous, sacrificing love;
The stainless innocence of youth,
The gentleness of lamb and dove.

And when to thine Emmaus dim
Thou goest sadly, drooping-eyed,
O may the hallowed feet of him
Come after, in the eventide,
And join thee in the way, and make
Thy heart within thee glow and burn,
And then to be his guest thee take;—
Soon to a shape of glory turn
And vanish: may thy sorrow still
Be comforted; thy labor blest;
And may his peace thy bosom fill,
When thou shalt enter to his rest.

God give thee many a sunset store
Of poet fancies,—golden things!
Sweet, simple songs, croon'd o'er and o'er,
And many bright imaginings;
With music thee exalt above
All sense of care, on Rapture's wing,
And make thee yearn, and bid thee love,
Where Handel and Beethoven sing:
Give thee a fireside nook;—the field
Besprent with June's fresh largess o'er;
The comfort brooks and gardens yield;
The uplift of the hills; the lore
Of Ocean, and the Bards;—the smile
Of wife and child and friends, at even;—
Rest and refreshment, after toil;
And, after Earth and Time—then, Heaven!